

What is back flow, what causes it and how can it be prevented?

BACKFLOW is a serious occurrence that can effect the drinking water supply. It is the undesirable reverse flow of non-potable (non-drinkable) water or other substances that can contaminate the drinking water system due to a cross connection in the piping.

This brochure will explain what a cross connection is, how back flow occurs and what you can do to ensure our drinking water is kept safe.

The City of North Lauderdale administers a back flow prevention program in conjunction with federal, state and local code requirements to ensure backflow prevention devices are installed and maintained where backflow may be a risk.

DEFINITIONS

BACKFLOW is the reversing of normal water flow direction. Normally, water under pressure in the City water main flows INTO your business. A sudden drop in pressure can reverse the water flow. When this happens, water can be “sucked” OUT of the business and into the City’s water system.

CROSS CONNECTION is an actual or potential link between the City’s drinking water system and a non-potable water source.

PROPERTY OWNERS are responsible for preventing contaminants and pollutants from entering the water distribution system. Keeping the water system safe, and clean, is an important partnership between the city and property owners.

Code of Ordinances

Under Ordinance 91-11-802, and in accordance with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, the City of North Lauderdale created the “Cross-Connection Control and Backflow Prevention Program.” The program identifies properties having the potential to create an imminent/substantial danger to the public health by and from the contamination of the public water system.

All businesses, buildings three (3) or more floors, institutional/governmental buildings are required to install a backflow prevention device. Installation requirements are the responsibility of the property owner, any failure to do so can result in discontinuing water service until installation requirements are met.

Facility inspections and backflow prevention devices are essential to ensure safe drinking water for the entire community.



For more information, please contact
Public Works Department
City of North Lauderdale
701 SW 71 Ave.
North Lauderdale, FL 33068
954-724-7070

PROTECTING OUR DRINKING WATER

*Why backflow testing
is so important...*



**Cross Connection
Control Program**

Water delivery relies on pressure; it always takes the path of least resistance as it travels through the water system from high to low pressure areas. Normally, water travels in one direction, from treatment plants, through water mains, then to each customer's service connection. Certain pressure loss incidents, such as a water main break or fully opened fire hydrant, can force water back into the drinking water system.

Backflow Prevention Assemblies

Typically, backflow prevention assemblies are required for plumbing system connection that contain industrial fluids or chemicals, irrigation systems, fertilizers, or auxiliary water sources. These devices are subject to annual inspection, maintenance, testing and reporting requirements to ensure each device continues to protect against cross connections. Backflow prevention assembly requirements are determined by plumbing inspections performed at initial or remodel construction projects during the building permit process.

Property Owner Requirements

As the area water provider, the North Lauderdale Public Works/Utilities Department is responsible for ensuring that all requirements of the Florida Administrative Code (Chapter 17-22 and Chapter 70 of the City's Code of Ordinances are met.

The City has determined that all backflow prevention devices are to be tested annually. All testing and repair work, if needed, must be completed by a Certified Backflow Technician who is registered with the City and meets the requirements set forth by the Public Works/Utilities Department. Once you choose a plumber, you must obtain a permit through the City's Community Development Department.

North Lauderdale has Certified Backflow Technicians that are able to perform the test for you at a charge of \$106 per device. You can schedule this service by calling the Public Works/Utilities Departments at 954-724-7070.

**IF YOUR BACKFLOW CERTIFICATION IS NOT COMPLETED ANNUALLY,
YOUR WATER SERVICE MAY BE TERMINATED.**

Should the test(s) fail and require repair or replacement of the Backflow Prevention Device, you will be required to hire a licensed plumber and obtain the necessary permits to complete the work. There is no charge by the City for a reinspection.

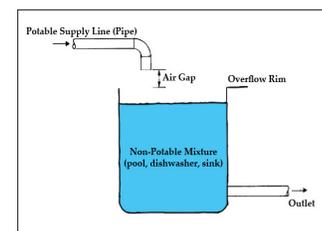
For your protection, if the plumber you choose cannot show proof of this required certification, please do not use them. For more information about how to hire a licensed plumber, visit the Broward County Permitting and Licensing website or call 954-765-4400, Option 2.

How serious is backflow?

Any time contaminants are allowed to flow into the drinking water system, there is a potential for health risks. The illustrations below show how we can all help prevent backflow from happening.

EXAMPLES OF BACKFLOW PREVENTERS

A physical separation between potable water pipes and non-potable water source.



DOUBLE CHECK VALVE ASSEMBLY (DCVA)



When back flow occurs, spring loaded check valves close to create a seal and stop the water from flowing backwards.

REDUCED PRESSURE PRINCIPLE BACKFLOW ASSEMBLY (RPBA)



Spring loaded valves open when backflow is present allowing contaminated water to drain out harmlessly.