



CROSS CONNECTION / BACKFLOW PREVENTION PROGRAM

KEEPING OUR DRINKING WATER SAFE

Oregon City Water Division is mandated by state regulation and by city ordinance to control and eliminate any actual, or potential, cross connections to the public drinking water supply. Any time the drinking water supply comes in contact with an objectionable or harmful substance, a cross connection is created.

Cross connections can lead to contamination when a change in pressure within the water supply piping allows the water to flow backwards. This reversal of flow, called backflow, can allow contaminated water to flow back into the supply piping, threatening health and safety. Although under normal circumstances the city water supply is pressurized to keep water flowing to your tap, unforeseen circumstances (such as the need to fight a fire, or when a water main breaks) can suddenly change the pressure in the supply piping, allowing the water to siphon back from your tap to the city supply.

Backflow prevention assemblies are installed to protect against contamination caused by backflow conditions. We follow guidelines established by the Oregon Health Authority and the American Water Works Association in determining the appropriate assembly for any given situation.

Residential and commercial customers are required to have backflow prevention assemblies on **irrigation systems** and on **fire sprinkler systems**. Water service lines are required to have assemblies when there is a well on the premises, or when there are other systems on the customer's premises that could present a cross connection. Commercial customers are required to have backflow prevention assemblies at the water meter and may need additional assemblies dependent upon the water-using equipment found on the premises.

Backflow prevention assemblies must be tested after installation, after repair or relocation, and at least annually by an Oregon-certified backflow assembly tester. Failure to install approved backflow prevention or conduct a required annual test on a backflow prevention assembly shall result in denial or discontinuation of water service.

Please have the backflow prevention annual testing for irrigation systems completed prior to the irrigation season. This ensures the assembly is working properly and will perform the job for which it is intended – protecting your drinking water from backflow contamination.

Like fastening your seat belt or donning a life vest, backflow prevention measures provide protection for events that can happen.

Still have questions? Contact Water Quality staff at 503.657.8241 ext. 2121, or email cc-bpp@orc.org.