

What Can I Do About It?

You should become familiar with the water system in your residence and/or place of business. Look at every usage point and visualize what might happen if the water flow suddenly reversed its normal direction.



For example, you should install inexpensive hose connection vacuum breakers to prevent backsiphonage through hoses. Lawn sprinkling systems, swimming pools, and boilers must be equipped with an appropriate backflow prevention device. In certain instances, you may need professional assistance in determining the required protection against backflow, or to test and certify that your backflow preventers are working properly.



Where Can I Get More Information?

If you would like more information, or if at any time you suspect a backflow has occurred, contact the WRC Cross Connection Control Unit at (248) 858-5370 or (248) 858-4991 or visit our website at <http://www.oakgov.com/water/pages/services/cccp.aspx>



Safe Drinking Water

It's Your Responsibility Too!

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What Is A Cross-Connection?

A cross-connection is an arrangement of piping or fixtures through which a backflow could occur. Think of the things around your home or business which contain water you wouldn't want to drink; lawn sprinklers, mop buckets, toilet tanks, pools, etc. Any city water connection to these items, and others, forms an avenue through which the contents may backflow into your drinking water system.



What Is Backflow?

Backflow is the reversal of the normal direction of water flow which could result in undesirable material entering the water system. Backflow can occur whenever the water pressure is reduced enough to cause a vacuum or "backsiphonage." This same principle is involved when you drink through a straw. Some situations which can cause a backflow are main breaks, hydrants opened for fire fighting, or undersized piping. Another form of backflow, called "backpressure," occurs when equipment like lawn irrigation pumps, boilers, power washers, and others are connected to your water lines.



What Cross-Connections Might Be In My Home Or Business?

The most common cross-connection is created by using an ordinary garden hose. Hoses are used in a variety of potentially hazardous situations such as fertilizer aspirators, laundry tubs, flushing clogged sewers, swimming pools, car washing, etc. All hose bibbs (outside spigots) associated with the above hazards must be equipped with a hose connection type vacuum breaker or one that's built into the spigot.

Some significant potentially hazardous cross-connections to look for include non-code approved or improperly installed toilet valves, underground lawn sprinklers, swimming pools, hot tubs, boilers, water powered sump pumps, heating systems, fire sprinklers, hose bibbs, etc.

What Is Being Done About It?

Cross-connections are prohibited by state, county, and local municipal plumbing codes and ordinances. All Michigan water utilities are now required by the Michigan Safe Drinking Water Act to have a Cross-Connection Control Program. The Water Resources Commissioner's Office previously implemented a program for the inspection, elimination, and prevention of cross-connections in medical, commercial, industrial, and institutional facilities. New and renovated residential plumbing inspections are initiated through the local city, village or township plumbing permit process while existing residential plumbing systems are inspected by the WRC as part of the comprehensive program. After your inspection, you will be contacted by letter if you are required to install and/or test any devices at your home. In some instances, you will need to hire a plumber certified in cross-connections to properly test these devices. Please help to protect yourself and your neighbors by eliminating potential cross connections within your plumbing systems.

