

Cross Connection Control / Backflow

****NOTICE**** Changes to Grey Forest Utilities Cross Connection Control Program.

What is a Cross Connection?

A cross connection is a connection between a potable drinking water supply and a possible source of contamination or pollution. Under the provisions of the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1971, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established national standards for safe drinking water. Each state is required to enforce the various regulations of the Safe Drinking Water Act and how it relates to its state laws.

To meet these provisions, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) on January 1, 1996, enacted a state law which requires the public water suppliers to implement and enforce the Cross-Connection Control Program requirements located in **the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 30, Chapter 290 of the Rules and Regulations for Public Water Suppliers and Title 30 Chapter 344 Subchapter E of the Environmental Quality (Specific Conditions and Cross-Connection Control as it relates to Landscape Irrigation.)**

What is Backflow?

Backflow is the undesirable reversal of flow in a potable water distribution system. Water that is always under pressure can only flow in one direction. Then how can water flow in reverse? Water will always flow towards the point of lowest pressure. If a water main were to break or if the fire department opened several fire hydrants to help fight a fire, the pressure in the water main could drop. The demand upstream could cause a reversal in flow.

Cross connections and the possibility of backflow need to be recognized so they do not occur. A garden hose submerged in a hot tub, swimming pool, car radiator or attached to an insect/fertilizer sprayer could siphon the liquid back into the water main. Water from an irrigation system could be siphoned back into the public water supply.

Why Do We Require Backflow Prevention Now?

Due to recordkeeping compliance for backflow prevention testing, we need to meet both state and federal regulation requirements. To do this, we are making sure everyone is informed of hazards that are associated with backflow and cross connections. Both customers and Grey Forest Utilities must be responsible and vigilant by installing and maintaining backflow prevention assemblies as needed. This will ensure our water quality remains clean, safe, and protected.

Is Backflow Prevention Assembly Mandatory or Are You “Grandfathered” In?

“Grandfather” clauses do not apply to backflow prevention assemblies, because water quality needs to stay clean, safe, and protected. Backflow prevention measures can protect the water system from concerns of contamination and unsafe drinking water. Backflow protection assemblies, accurate testing, and maintenance will all help water quality and safety remain priority for Grey Forest Utilities and our customers.

Testing of Backflow Prevention Assemblies

All backflow protection assemblies must be tested upon installation, replacement, repair, or relocation. Because backflow prevention assemblies are mechanical devices that will degrade over time, all backflow assemblies should be tested annually to ensure they are in working order.

Grey Forest Utilities has chosen to partner with Vepo, LLC to allow for the online submission of Backflow Prevention Assembly Test and Maintenance Reports. All testing information will be entered directly by the tester into the online password protected Envirotrax® system provided by Vepo, LLC. Testers will no longer be able to submit paper test reports directly to the utility.

Finding or Becoming a Registered Tester

All Backflow Prevention Assembly Testers (BPATs) are required to register with Vepo, LLC. Upon registration and verification of license, insurance, and test gauge accuracy, the tester will be added to the approved list of Backflow Prevention Assembly Testers.

Note: Backflow prevention assemblies on fire protection sprinkler systems are required by the State Fire Marshal to be tested and/or repaired by a BPAT, who is a full-time employee of a fire protection sprinkler company, that is licensed with the State Fire Marshal's Office.

Preferred Backflow Prevention Assemblies

Backflow prevention assembly is required for Wells and Sprinkler/Irrigation systems per Texas, if they are connected to public utility water, per **Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 30, Chapter 290 of the Rules and Regulations for Public Water Suppliers and Title 30 Chapter 344 Subchapter E**. Prevention of backflow can be addressed by installing different types of valves. Below are a variety of backflow prevention options that can be used. Depending on the solution needed, TCEQ recommends, but is not limited to, (RPBA) Reduced Pressure Backflow Assembly or a Backflow Prevention with Air Gap (AG) for Wells but recommends RPBA's for Sprinklers and Irrigation systems.

***All costs associated with installation, maintenance, operation and testing of backflow prevention assemblies are the responsibility of the customer. Accurate tests and maintenance records must be maintained by customers as well.**

Backflow Prevention Assemblies

(RPBA) Reduced Pressure Backflow Assembly (Back pressure backflow and back siphonage)



Backflow Prevention with Air Gap (AG) Air Gap (Back pressure backflow and back siphonage)



Double Check Valve Backflow Prevention Assembly (Mostly used for wells and pools. Used for back pressure back flow and back siphonage.)



(PVB) Pressure Vacuum Breaker Assembly (Back siphonage only. Mostly used in sprinkler/irrigation systems)



Backflow Prevention with Air Gap (AG) Air Gap (Back pressure backflow and back siphonage)

[Click here to find a BPAT registered to work in the Grey Forest Utilities.](#)

[Click here to download a Quick Start Guide with information on how to become a registered BPAT.](#)