

You can Help!

Now that you have some background, you may ask.. What's the big deal? Well, the big deal is that backflows due to cross connections can cause sickness and death. Even in your own home, you can unwittingly create a cross connection:

Putting the garden hose in a pet's water bucket to fill it or the fish tank

Connecting your garden hose to a plant fertilizer or insect spray unit.

Over half of the nation's cross connections involve unprotected garden hoses.

We at the Cambridge Water Department, protect the water entering your system. However, it is your responsibility to protect the water on your property and in your home.

If you need information on what you can do to pro-



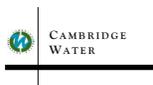
tect it or have any questions,

please call 617 349-4025 . We will be glad to assist

CAMBRIDGE WATER DEPARTMENT

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Cambridge, MA 02138

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CAMBRIDGE WATER DEPARTMENT

Drink Cambridge Tap Water.



Protecting Your Water Against Contamination

Tel: 617 349-4025

An Introduction to Cross Connection Control

Everyday, the City of Cambridge proudly supplies an average of 14 million gallons of water to its citizens. Water that exceeds the requirements of the EPA. Before the water is pumped to your home or business, it has gone through careful treatment and numerous tests to ensure its quality.

Did you know that your tap water (drinking water) has to meet standards that exceed those for bottled water? Unlike tap water, the quality of finished bottled water is not government monitored. You don't need to buy bottled water for safety reasons in the City of Cambridge because our tap water exceeds federal and state drinking water standards. Congress established the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) in 1974 to protect human health from contaminants in drinking water and to prevent contamination of existing groundwater supplies. This act and its amendments (1986 and 1996) require many actions to protect drinking water and its sources. One of these actions is the installation and maintenance of an approved



*Our goal: Clean
Safe drinking
water !*

backflow prevention assembly at the water service connection whenever a potential hazard is determined to exist in the customer's system. Without proper protection devices, cross connections can occur.

What and Why

What is a cross connection? A connection between your drinking water and another source of water that combines the two when a backflow condition occurs. When this occurs, your drinking water can become contaminated. Ok. So? What is backflow? Backflow is when the water in your pipes (the pipes after the water meter goes backward (the opposite direction from its normal flow). There are two situations that can cause the water to go backward (backflow):

Backpressure– the pressure in your pipes is greater than the pressure coming in.

Backsiphonage-a negative pressure in one of the pipes.

To protect the water system, two kinds of backflow prevention assemblies are required for all customers that present a potential hazard to the City's water system;



Certified Backflow Inspectors keep the City's water system safe

External– to protect the City's water from cross connection with the water on the customer's premises

Internal– to protect the customer from potentially hazardous cross connections in their own system.

What is considered a potential hazard? ANY possibility of pollutants, contaminants, and system or plumbing hazards. For example: fire protection systems, irrigation systems, gas stations, restaurants, hospitals to name a few.

To keep your drinking water safe, we diligently check the plans of each new business for compliance with cross connection/backflow requirements. We test all backflow devices in the City and when warranted fail devices that do not pass approved standards. Failed devices are then taken out of service to ensure that no backflow event can occur.

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