



Leaving a hose in a swimming pool can create a potential backflow hazard.

Mandated by state and federal law, backflow prevention devices prevent contamination of the water systems from homes and businesses by using equipment that stops the backward flow of water through a pipe or cross connections between drinking water and unknown fluids. Because the City is committed to providing clean drinking water, it amended an ordinance requiring commercial and multi-family properties with three or more units to install backflow prevention devices by October 1, 2010. Everyone needs to do their part to keep the community water supply safe.

What exactly is backflow?

Backflow occurs whenever a drop in pressure within a plumbing system causes water to flow backward through a pipe into the community water system or when downstream pressure within the pipes exceeds normal pressure, causing the reversal of water flow. Water usually seeks the path of least resistance, so a variance in pressure causes the water to change directions and possibly bring contaminants into the community water supply.

What is a cross-connection?

Cross-connections occur when safe drinking water mixes with other unknown contaminants. If backflow occurs, these contaminants could mix with the potable drinking water system, possibly causing the water to have unusual tastes, odors or colors. Backflow preventers are required to prevent possible cross-connections. A cross-connection could occur when a garden hose is left in a pool or in a basin with soap, such as when washing a car. Water could flow back through the hose and into the community water supply.

What is being done to prevent backflow?

The State of Florida and federal government mandate backflow prevention programs. According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, proper maintenance of a water distribution system must include a backflow prevention program. Florida statutes also require a backflow prevention device. City ordinance 97-148 mandates backflow preventers to protect the public water supply from possible contamination. The City code applies only to commercial properties and multi-family residences with three units or more.

Why do I need to install a backflow preventer?

Backflow prevention devices must be installed on multi-family properties with three or more units, as well as on commercial properties. Since 1997, the City's Building Division has been enforcing installation of prevention devices on all new development. Prior to 1997, installation and certification was voluntary. During the last two years, City Utilities Division staff has been conducting an inventory of properties that do and do not have a backflow preventer. All City facilities have backflow preventers in place.

Recently, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection discussed amendments to the state Administrative Code requiring community water supply providers to submit a written report, which includes compliance with backflow prevention policies. In addition, the Broward County Health Department requested records to document a Citywide compliance program. The City is now following federal, state and local mandates to make sure all properties have backflow prevention devices to keep the water supply safe.

How do I get one of these backflow prevention devices?

A backflow preventer is a tool to prevent potentially contaminated water from siphoning into the community water supply. A mechanical backflow preventer usually is installed directly behind the water meter. Occasionally, plumbers might put the device on the building if that is more appropriate, but the City recommends placement behind the water meter. Licensed plumbers need a building permit to install the backflow preventers.

How much do these devices cost?

The cost of installation varies depending upon the size of the water line. Prices can range anywhere from \$585 to more than \$8,000, which are usually installed at large commercial facilities. An annual testing of the backflow preventer and certification fee are required to ensure the device is working properly. The City is waiving the initial certification fee until Oct. 1, 2010.

When do I need to install the backflow preventer?

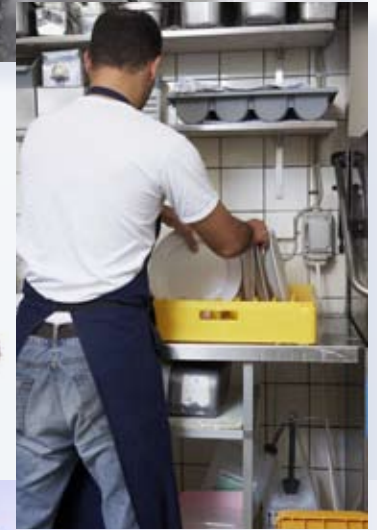
To comply with the various federal, state and local laws mentioned above regarding backflow, the City is requiring full compliance by Oct. 1, 2010 to prevent a possible public health risk.

I do not fully understand this program. Who can I call?

The Public Works Department is responsible for the program. For more information, call 954-345-2160.



Backflow Prevention



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Providing safe drinking water to all our residents and businesses is a main priority for the City of Coral Springs Public Works Department/Utilities Division. The City is committed to following safe water use standards set forth by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and one way to do this is by using backflow prevention systems.

The City and its water customers are all responsible for keeping the water supply free from potentially harmful contaminants. To avoid a potential safety hazard, backflow preventers are required by state and federal law.

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