

## What should you do?

### City Code

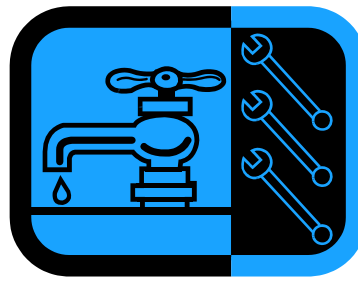
The existence of cross connections is often deemed unlawful by city codes. Failure to comply with cross connection codes will result in disconnection of water services to your home or business until compliance is reached.

### Backflow prevention

All domestic water connections should have a backflow assembly device installed at the water connection. A backflow prevention assembly is a mechanical device that prevents the flow of water backwards through a pipe.

There are several different types of devices to choose from. Backflow prevention assemblies require annual testing to ensure they are properly protecting the water supply.

Contact your City Hall for information on city codes. Contact your Public Works Department for advice on backflow assembly installation and testing.



For information on the dangers of cross connections, and how to prevent backflow, visit:

- [www.penlight.org/waterServices.aspx](http://www.penlight.org/waterServices.aspx)
- [water.epa.gov/infrastructure/drinkingwater/pws/crossconnectioncontrol](http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/drinkingwater/pws/crossconnectioncontrol)
- [www.abpa.org](http://www.abpa.org)

### Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

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[www.deq.idaho.gov](http://www.deq.idaho.gov)

Idaho Rural Water Association  
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(208) 343-7001  
[www.idahoruralwater.com](http://www.idahoruralwater.com)



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Do your part to

**Keep Your  
Drinking  
Water  
Safe**



**A guide to  
backflow  
and cross  
connection**

## What is the concern?

- Your home or business is connected to the public water supply
- The potential exists for you to contaminate the city's drinking water
- Proper management of your plumbing system is essential to protecting the health of your family and community

## Cross Connection

A cross connection is a link between drinkable (or potable) water and any potential pollutant.

Examples include:

- A hose in a bucket
- A hose with a sprayer containing fertilizer or pesticide
- A submerged sprinkler or irrigation outlet
- Swimming pools
- Water softeners
- Hose connections to a laundry tub

## Backflow

### Why does cross connection matter?

Cross connections provide pathways for contaminants to enter the drinking water supply.

Water flows to your home or business due to differences in pressure. If these pressures are reversed, water can flow backwards into the distribution system. This is called **backflow**.

### How does backflow occur?

Backflow can occur due to a main break, pump failure, water drawdown from firefighting or hydrant flushing, or any usage where external pressure exceeds that of the distribution system. These incidents are more common than you may think, and are usually unexpected.

## The danger? Backflow can cause health hazards!

From 1981 to 1998, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) documented 57 waterborne disease outbreaks related to cross connections. These outbreaks caused **9,734** cases of illness. The CDC also states that only a small percentage of backflow events that occur are actually reported.

Contaminants that can be introduced to your water via backflow incidents include: **metals, pesticides, E. coli, Salmonella, Giardia, other bacteria and pathogens, nitrates, nitrites, anti-freeze, propane, Freon, and more.**