

## FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONCERNING BACKFLOW PREVENTION CONTACT:

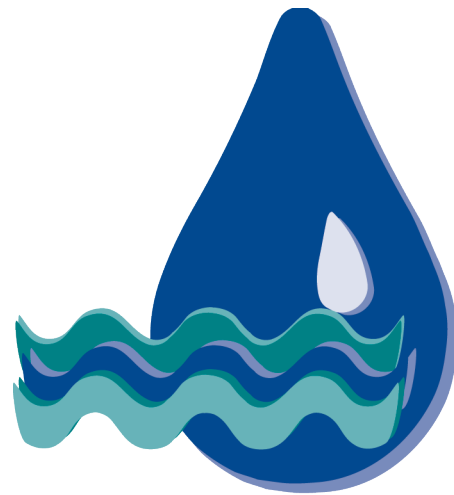
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## Palm Beach County Water Utilities

# BACKFLOW PREVENTION

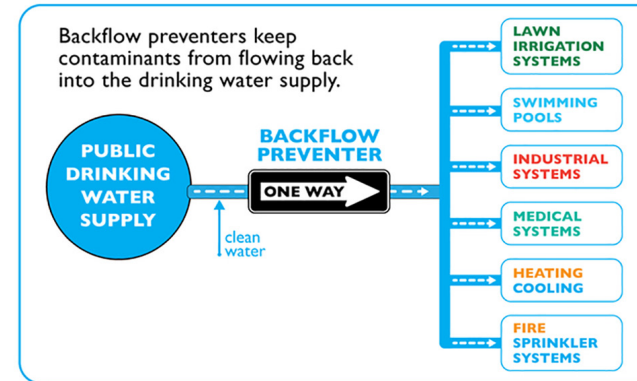
## Frequently asked questions

**PBCWATER.com**

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## WHY IS BACKFLOW PREVENTION SO IMPORTANT



protect the public drinking water distribution system.

### WHAT CAUSES BACKFLOW?

Backflow is possible in two situations: backsiphonage and backpressure.

### WHAT IS BACKSIPHONAGE?

When there is a sudden reduction in water pressure in the public drinking water distribution system, such as during fire fighting or when a water main breaks, water flow can potentially be reversed. This can create a suction effect, possibly drawing contaminated water into the drinking water system.

### WHAT IS BACKPRESSURE?

Backpressure is created when the pressure in a private non-drinking water system, such as in a re-circulating system containing soap, acid or anti-freeze, exceeds the pressure in the public drinking water system that it is connected to. This can force contaminated water into the drinking water system.

*Backflow is a situation that can occur when hydraulic conditions within a water system deviate from “normal” conditions, possibly allowing contaminated water to enter through a cross connection in the drinking prevent this situation from occurring, the Palm Beach County Water Utilities Department (PBCWUD) requires non-residential and large meter customers to install and maintain testable backflow prevention assemblies to*

### HOW CAN BACKFLOW BE PREVENTED?

To protect the public drinking water system, the PBCWUD requires a **REDUCED PRESSURE PRINCIPLE ASSEMBLY** on all non-residential services and new residential services with 1½” or larger potable water meters. Water-based fireline systems with no additives require, at a minimum, a **Double Check Detector Assembly (DCDA)**, while water-based fireline systems with additives or systems with auxiliary water require a **Reduced Pressure Principle Detector Assembly (RPDA)**.

### WHAT IS A BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY?

A backflow prevention assembly is an approved, testable assembly that uses valves in different configurations to prevent potentially contaminated water from reversing direction and flowing into the public water distribution system.

## HOW IS AN ASSEMBLY APPROVED?

PBCWUD recognizes and approves only those testable backflow prevention assemblies that complete the entire testing procedure of the Foundation for Hydraulic Research and Cross Connection Control at the University of Southern California or HSSE with one year field test.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF I NEED A BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY?

◆ ***New customer connecting to a newly installed water service*** will be provided with written notice if a backflow prevention assembly must be installed prior to service activation.

◆ ***New and existing customers with a backflow prevention assembly installed*** will be notified by PBCWUD that the backflow prevention assembly requires annual testing.

◆ ***Existing customers without a backflow prevention assembly installed*** will be notified by letter that the backflow prevention assembly needs to be installed.

## IS THERE A GENERAL COMPLIANCE SCHEDULE AND PROCESS?

Your backflow prevention assembly must be in compliance with PBCWUD's testing requirements by the date shown on the notification letter. You will receive a follow-up notice after 30 days. If compliance has not already been achieved after 60 days, you will receive a notice that your water service may be interrupted unless you achieve compliance.

## WHO CAN INSTALL A BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY?

PBCWUD recognizes only State or County-licensed plumbing contractors and their employees that are a **Certified Backflow Prevention Technician (CBPT)** for the installation and maintenance of potable backflow prevention assemblies.

## WHO OWNS AND IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TESTING AND MAINTENANCE OF THE BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY?

The customer owns and is solely responsible for ensuring that the assembly is installed and in satisfactory operating condition at all times.

◆ ***New customers requiring a backflow prevention assembly*** are responsible for hiring a CBPT to install the backflow prevention assembly. PBCWUD will perform the Initial Backflow Prevention Assembly Certification at the time the water service is activated. The customer will be billed an Initial Backflow Certification Fee of \$40 per assembly. Service will not be activated until the assembly passes this Initial Backflow Prevention Assembly Test and Certification. If the assembly does not pass this certification, the customer must contact a CBPT to have the problem corrected. The customer must then contact PBCWUD to have the assembly retested and water service activated. The customer will be billed an additional \$40.00 per assembly per testing. After initial certification by

PBCWUD, all subsequent certifications must be performed by the customer's CBPT.

◆ ***New and existing customers with a backflow prevention assembly already installed*** are responsible for ensuring that a CBPT tests and certifies the backflow prevention assembly. PBCWUD will send a notification letter to each customer, advising when the annual test is due. The customer must contact a CBPT to perform the test and ensure that a Test and Maintenance Report is received by the Environmental Health and Safety Section at PBCWUD. The customer is responsible for having all repair and maintenance performed on the backflow prevention assembly by a CBPT. After any repair or maintenance, the assembly must be re-tested immediately and test results submitted to the Environmental Health and Safety Section at PBCWUD.

## HOW DO I FIND AN APPROVED CERTIFIED BACKFLOW TECHNICIAN?

A plumbing contractor who is a CBPT can be found through an online search. You may also contact the PBCWUD Environmental Health and Safety Section for names of recognized CBPT. Due to the fact that test prices vary, you may want to contact several CBPTs to obtain quotes.

## HOW OFTEN DO I NEED TO HAVE MY BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY TESTED?

PBCWUD requires that your backflow prevention assembly be tested at the following times:

1. When your backflow prevention assembly is first installed a PBCWUD employee will perform this test.
2. The backflow prevention assembly must be tested annually thereafter. Your CBPT must perform this test.
3. After any repair or replacement of the backflow prevention assembly your CBPT must perform this test.

## WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR OBTAINING ALL REQUIRED PERMITS?

Customers are responsible for making sure that the CBPT obtains all required permits from the plumbing code officials responsible for the location.

