

What is a cross-connection?

A cross connection is a link between a potential source of pollution or contamination and a drinking water supply.

Whenever there is a connection between a potable water system and a non-potable environment, backflow may occur from back siphonage or backpressure. Backflow is defined as water of questionable quality, wastes, or other contaminants entering a potable water supply system due to a reversal of flow. These pressure fluctuations can be caused by:

- hydrant flushing;
- a water main break;
- a power outage;
- or other factors.

In order to ensure safe drinking water, backflow prevention devices or assemblies are required where water may be exposed to a pollutant or contaminant.



A Shared Responsibility



Cross-connections are prohibited by state, county, and local municipal plumbing codes and ordinances. All Michigan water utilities are required by the Safe Drinking Water Act 399 to have a cross-connection control program.

Our office has implemented a program for the inspection, elimination, and prevention of cross-connections in all residential, commercial, medical, industrial, and institutional facilities to assist in keeping drinking water safe.

The program requires plumbing systems to be inspected. New and renovated plumbing system inspections are to be initiated through the local city, village or township plumbing permit process and existing plumbing systems will be inspected by our skilled technicians.

If the inspection determines that prevention measures are needed to protect the drinking water in your home or business, you will be contacted by letter. This letter may require you to install a proper backflow prevention device or assembly or have the existing one properly installed and/or tested.

Please help to protect yourself and your neighbors by eliminating potential cross-connections within your plumbing systems.

Flowing Safely

UNDERSTANDING CROSS CONNECTION

 **WRC**
WATER RESOURCES COMMISSIONER

Jim Nash

oakgov.com/crossconnection
wrcrossconnection@oakgov.com

248-858-1431





What can you do to protect your home?

Become familiar with the water system in your home and place of business. Check where you use water and think about what could happen if the flow reverses. Pay careful attention to these high-risk cross-connection areas:

- Toilet valves
- Garden hoses
- Heating systems
- Boilers
- Fire sprinklers
- Hose bibbs
- Hot tubs
- Swimming pools
- Underground lawn sprinklers
- Water-powered sump pumps

Ensure that the proper protections are in place. Proper protections include hose connection vacuum breakers, backflow prevention devices and assemblies.

What is backflow prevention?

A backflow preventer is a means or mechanism to prevent backflow. The basic means for preventing backflow is an air gap, which either eliminates a cross-connection or provides a barrier from backflow. An air gap is the simplest way to ensure backflow does not happen.

The basic mechanism for preventing backflow is a mechanical backflow preventer, which provides a physical barrier to backflow. Consult a plumber or licensed and certified backflow prevention assembly testing company to assist you in choosing the proper backflow prevention option for your plumbing.

