

Protect Your Water From Contamination By Providing Backflow Prevention



Each day, City Water Light and Power provides over 22 million gallons of purified water to our customers. Before being pumped to your home or business, this water is routinely tested to ensure it meets all United States Environmental Protection Agency drinking water standards and is of the highest possible quality.

In spite of our efforts, Springfield's drinking water supply can be placed at risk by contaminants that "backflow" into the system from your home or business.

What is backflow?

Backflow occurs when water flows backwards through your water pipes. Backflow can be caused when a drop in pressure occurs in the incoming water main¹ or when pressure in the pipes inside your residential or commercial building becomes greater than the pressure in the water main. If your water pipes are connected to a source of contamination (see examples on next page) when backflow occurs, contaminants from that source can be siphoned into your drinking water, as well as that of the entire community.

To protect Springfield's drinking water supply from backflow-related health hazards, the Springfield City Code (Chapter 52, Article III) and the Illinois Plumbing Code require backflow prevention devices to be installed on all homes and



commercial buildings that have a potential source of contamination. These devices also should be installed on any existing property where the water system is either permanently or temporarily connected to a contamination source.

What is a contamination source?

Any direct connection of your home or business drinking water system to a source of contamination has the potential to create a health hazard if backflow occurs during the connection. Examples of potential contamination sources include:



- fire protection systems;
- lawn irrigation systems;
- boilers and chillers;
- restaurant food prep areas;
- chemical processing and manufacturing operations;
- hospital wastes; and
- a garden hose that has been placed into a pet water bowl, fish tank, ornamental pond, or swimming pool, or connected to a plant fertilizer or bug spray canister.



People who consume drinking water that has been accidentally mixed with chemicals or bacteria from any of these sources of contamination could become seriously ill. Backflow prevention devices can help prevent contaminated water from being accidentally mixed with our drinking water.

¹Two common reasons why mains might experience a drop in water pressure are main breaks and heavy consumption by firefighters battling a fire.

Some backflow prevention devices require annual inspections

It is your responsibility to help protect our drinking water supply from backflow contamination by ensuring your property is equipped with a working backflow prevention device.

Certain backflow prevention devices—RPZs² (reduced pressure zones) and double-checks—must be inspected annually by a plumber certified by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to ensure they are operating properly. Once a year, CWLP sends a letter to all customers identified as having these types of backflow prevention devices to remind them when their inspections are due. If you have an RPZ or double-check backflow prevention device at your property but have not received an inspection reminder letter in the past year, please contact us so we can add you to our mailing list. Common vacuum breakers found on most outside hose connections do not require annual inspections.

If your property's water system is ever connected to any source of contamination and you do not have a backflow prevention device, you need to have one installed immediately to protect the health and safety of your family, employees, and neighbors. Backflow prevention devices can be installed by any licensed plumbing contractor. If you aren't sure if you already have a backflow prevention device or what type of device you have or might need, or if you have any questions about backflow or how you can help protect our water supply, please feel free to contact us. We'll be glad to assist you any way we can.

IEPA requires CWLP water customers **to complete a backflow survey** every three years. This survey is available online at www.cwlp.com/surveys or by calling (217) 789-2323, ext. 1630.

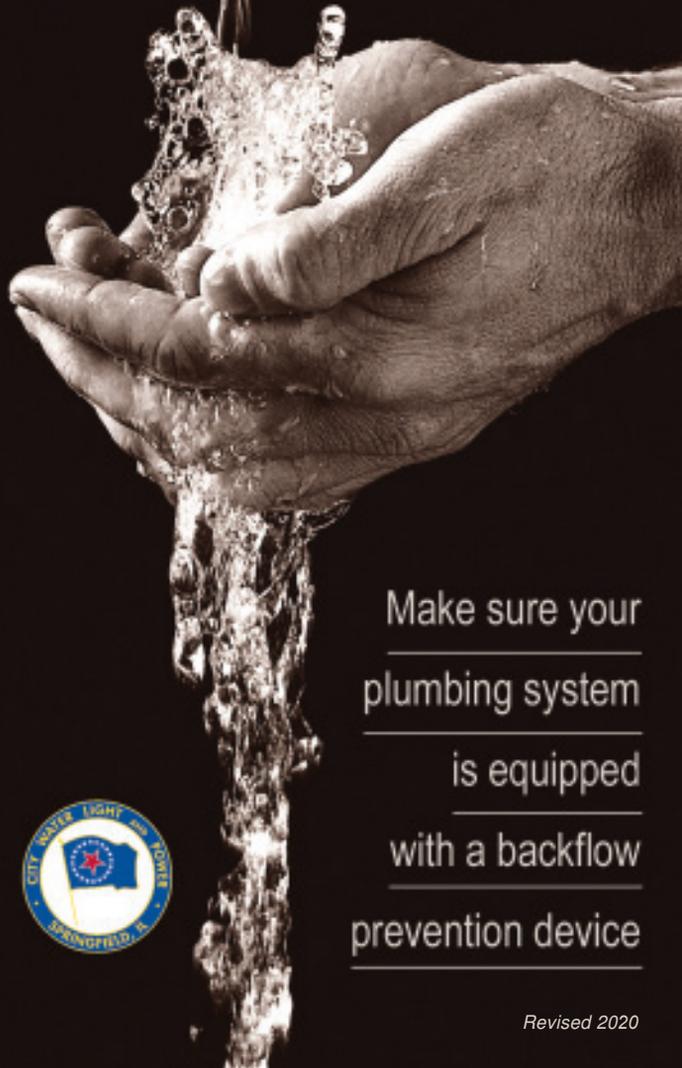
Want More Backflow Information?

Phone: 789-2323, ext. 1630

Email: backflow@cwlp.com Web:

www.abpa.org

Protecting Against Backflow Contamination



Make sure your
plumbing system
is equipped
with a backflow
prevention device

