

Back Flow (Premises Isolation) Information

Why? The biggest threat to our water quality is from the premises of our members. Many household activities can provide potential dangers to our water quality, particularly when “backflow” occurs. Lawn sprinkler systems, animal watering devices, swimming pools, hot tubs, outdoor hoses filled with water, hose-end pesticide sprayers, poor plumbing, and even poor cleaning practices within homes can put our water quality in danger. If pressure in our water main drops (like when a fire hydrant is used, or a main pipe breaks), then contaminated water within a home’s plumbing system could back-siphon into our mains and contaminate our water. Commercial properties may pose an even greater risk. As your water purveyor, Mt. View-Edgewood Water is required by WAC 246-290-490 to protect your public water system from contamination via cross-connections.

The best way to protect our water quality is to have all homes and businesses install a backflow prevention assembly on the customer side of the water meter. This is called “Premises Isolation”.

Who? In August (2003) the Board of Directors decided to gradually phase-in all properties to premises isolation in order to protect our water quality. Members prior to August 2003 are not required to add premises isolation until their home or business is sold, at which time the new owner will have to install premises isolation. **All new memberships (which includes transferred memberships) that are issued after August 2003 are required to have premises isolation at the meter.**

Where, When, Type of Assembly? Members accomplish this by installing (or having a contractor install) an approved testable backflow assembly immediately on the customer side of the water meter, and prior to any other connections. Within 60 days of membership, and annually thereafter, a Washington State Certified Backflow Assembly Tester must test this assembly and furnish the Water Company with the “passed” test report. In most cases premises isolation assemblies can be installed by a local contractor for about \$350, or by the homeowner for less than \$125.

Commercial Properties. The approved type of premises isolation assembly for all commercial properties is a Reduced Pressure Backflow Assembly (RPBA).

Residential Properties. The approved type of premises isolation assembly for all residential properties is a Double Check Valve Assembly (DCVA), unless the residential property contains any of the following high health cross-connection risks, in which case a RPBA is then required. High health risks include premises with wells or other auxiliary water supply interconnected to our water supply, premises with fire suppression sprinkler systems, piers or docks with connection to our water supply, premises that deny or restrict survey access, or premises that have any of the following activities: metal plating, laboratories, irrigation systems that add chemicals, film processing, beverage bottling, food processing, chemical manufacturing, or dry cleaning.

Testing Requirements. For new memberships and transferred memberships where no premise isolation assembly is already installed, an approved assembly must be installed, tested, and the test report must be received at the Water Co. within 60 days of the application for membership. Thereafter on an annual basis the member must have a Backflow Assembly Tester perform a test on the assembly to verify the assembly is functioning properly. Annual test reports are due to the water company by the end of the anniversary month in which the assembly was installed.