

What Is Backflow and Cross-Connection?

Irrigation



Threaded faucets



Hot tubs or pools



Fire sprinklers



Ponds and fountains



Connections to the water system that could contaminate the drinking water are called **cross-connections**. **Backflow** is caused by high or low pressure pushing or pulling water back into the water system. If a cross-connection exists and then backflow occurs, fixtures such as those above could introduce contaminated water into your drinking water.

Garden hoses are a common example of a cross-connection. A garden hose in a bucket of soapy water is a cross-connection between your drinking water and soapy maybe even dirty water. If low pressure occurs soapy, dirty water could end up being siphoned into your drinking water. Garden hoses can be protected from siphonage by vacuum breakers like those pictured here.



Check to see if your hose bibs have anti-siphon devices.



Install vacuum breakers at hose bibs without anti-siphon devices.

All hose faucets should be protected with vacuum breakers. Surfside provides these free of charge at the business office.

Cross-connections, such as irrigation systems and hot tubs, require backflow prevention assemblies installed at the meter. These assemblies (see below) have multiple valves for added protection, protect against both backpressure and siphonage, and can be tested to confirm they are working. Some cross-connections require or qualify for an air gap. Air gaps are the highest level of protection against backflow.



Double Check Valve Assembly (DC)



Air Gap



Reduced Pressure Backflow Assembly (RP)

Backflow assemblies and air gaps are required to be tested right after being installed and then every year afterwards. They must also be tested after repair, reinstallation, and relocation. Assemblies must be tested by a DOH certified Backflow Assembly Tester. Yearly tests are due by April 30TH each year. Surfside will test and bill for any assembly or air gap which has not submitted a test report by April 30TH. Currently the fee for testing is \$35. Air gaps are inspected free of charge.