

## Does my backflow assembly need to be tested?

Yes. The Department of Public Works Water Division requires that a certified tester check some backflow assemblies at the time of installation, annually after installation, after repairs and after relocating. Backflow assembly testers are usually private contractors who must submit a report to the Water Division following the test.

## What happens if I do not test a backflow assembly after I have received a notification to test?

If for some reason you do not test your backflow assembly you may be cited and fined for non-compliance. Also, your water service may be discontinued/shut off to protect the public water system.

## Where are the most common cross-connections found?

Whenever a plumbing fixture is connected to the drinking water supply, a potential cross-connection exists. Some examples are:

- Wash basins and service sinks
- Laboratory equipment
- Irrigation or lawn sprinkler systems
- Swimming pools and spas
- Solar heat systems
- Fire sprinkler systems
- Photo developing equipment
- Chemical feed equipment
- Attachment to hose to apply weed killer or fertilizer or to flush antifreeze
- Food and beverage processing equipment
- Ornamental fountains
- Boilers



## Mandating Authorities

The United States Environmental Protection Agency Safe Water Drinking Act of 1974 provides jurisdiction over the public health aspects of the drinking water supply as does the Mass Department of Environmental Protection Agency, 310 CMR 22.22 along with the Massachusetts Plumbing Code 248 CMR.

By working together we can ensure safe drinking water for everyone.

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS PROGRAM PLEASE CALL 617-993-2700**



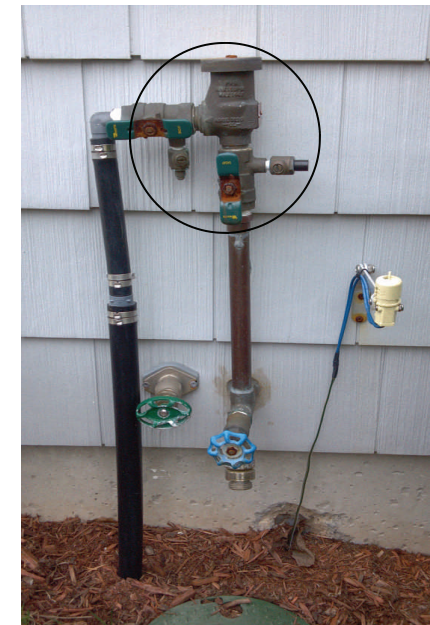
Town of Belmont Water Division  
PO Box 56

[http://www.belmont-ma.gov/Public\\_Documents/BelmontMA\\_Water/index](http://www.belmont-ma.gov/Public_Documents/BelmontMA_Water/index)

# *Town of Belmont Cross-Connection and Backflow Prevention Program*



**Vacuum Breaker installed on hose bib connection**



**Anti Siphon Vacuum Breaker for residential lawn irrigation systems**

Water systems depend on pressure to keep water flowing in the proper direction. Water distribution systems are designed so that the pressure is greater in the lines delivering the water than the pressure on the property side of the water meter. However, when there is a drop in water pressure on the town side, a reverse flow can occur. This is called a backflow. If this happens it is possible for unsanitary water from the customer's plumbing system to get sucked back into the public water system. If the water in the customer's system has come into contact with harmful substances and it backflows into the municipal drinking water system, it could be a hazard to public health.

The Belmont Department of Public Works Water Division is working hard to ensure our drinking water system remains safe. We require backflow prevention devices where they are mandated by law, and we work with customers to eliminate any potential cross-connections in our customers' plumbing that, unprotected by a backflow prevention device, be of concern.

Here are some answers to commonly asked questions about the Water Division's Cross-Connection and Backflow Prevention Programs:

### Who is required to have a backflow prevention assembly?

All commercial and industrial properties and irrigation meters are required to have a backflow prevention assembly. Most residences are not required to have one.

### How can I help prevent a dangerous backflow situation?

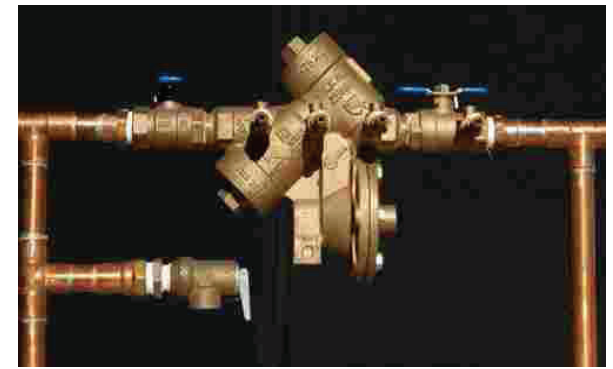
You can help by working with the Water Division's Cross Connection Control Program. Our program, which is required by the Environmental Protection Agency Drinking Water Program, is a combined effort between the Town's plumbing inspector and the cross-connection inspectors. It includes the elimination or protection of all cross-connections by approved methods by the installation of approved back-flow prevention assemblies. The different types of approved methods or backflow prevention assemblies used are based on what is known as "the degree of hazard." With an understanding of the hazards associated with potential cross-connections and backflow, you can help us protect our drinking water.

### What is a backflow assembly?

Backflow assemblies are devices placed on potential cross-connections to prevent water from flowing back into the public water system. The most common type of backflow assembly is a Reduced Pressure Assembly Valve. To ensure they work correctly, all backflow assemblies must be tested annually with the exception of atmospheric vacuum breakers.



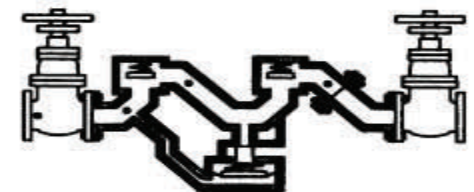
Brass Hose Connection Vacuum Breaker



Double Check Valve used on Heating Systems



Anti-Siphon Vacuum Breaker for Residential Irrigation Systems



Reduced Pressure Zone Assemblies for high risk applications Systems