Cross Connection and Backflow Prevention

Summit Park PSD's Cross-Connection Control program exists to protect our public water system against potential contamination from backflow.

Backflow is the reversal of the normal flow of water. It can happen when a drastic change in water pressure occurs.

If a source of contamination is connected to a plumbing system, when backflow occurs--such as a fertilizer dispenser on a garden hose--those contaminants could be siphoned back into the home or building's plumbing system, and potentially enter our public water lines.

That's why state and federal regulations require water systems to identify cross connections between the public water system and private plumbing systems and take steps to prevent backflow through these cross connections.

Click this link to watch a short video explaining backflow

Brought to you by Charleston Water System, Charleston SC.

Our Backflow Requirements

Summit Park PSD requires any customer, whose home or business operations present a potential backflow hazard, must install, maintain, and annually test a backflow prevention assembly device that meets state and federal specifications.

Our staff along with certified inspectors identify customer connections that may present a backflow hazard, such as businesses, manufacturing facilities, and in-ground irrigation systems. We then contact those customers and ask them to complete a form that provides the information we need to determine the degree of backflow hazard and what type of backflow prevention device should be installed.

Summit Park PSD does **not** install or test backflow preventers. Customers are responsible for having backflow preventers installed according to our specifications and be tested annually by a state certified tester.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is cross connection?

A ***cross connection*** is a link between a potable water system and a non-potable water system--in our case, Summit Park's public water lines and our customers' private plumbing systems. Backflow can occur through cross-connections.

Click this link for more details provided by West Sound Utility District

What is backflow?

Backflow is the reversal of the normal flow of water. It can happen as a result of water pressure differences or sudden changes in pressure and can allow contaminants to be siphoned back into a building's plumbing systems, and potentially, the public water supply. There are two types of backflow - back pressure backflow and back siphonage backflow.

What can cause backflow?

Backflow can be caused by a sudden drop in pressure in a public water main, which can create a sub-atmospheric condition.

For example, if a drop in pressure occurs while a hose is in a bucket of dirty water, that water could be sucked back into the home or building's plumbing system, and into the public water system, potentially contaminating the water for other users. A drop in pressure could be caused by a variety of things, including a water main break, hydrant flushing, etc.
Backflow preventers keep this from happening and prevent potential hazardous contamination of the community drinking water.

What does Summit Park PSD do to prevent backflow?

Summit Park PSD has installed and continues to install dual check valves in meter wells.
Summit Park PSD also requires a testable backflow prevention assembly appropriate for the degree of hazard. Backflow prevention assemblies prevent water from re-entering the public water supply during a loss of system pressure.

What can I do to prevent backflow?
You can prevent backflow in your home plumbing system by installing an inexpensive hose-bib vacuum breaker on each of your outside water spigots.

These vacuum breakers will prevent water from being back-siphoned from a polluted or even contaminated water source into your home's water pipes or the public water distribution system. These devices cost under $10.00 and are available at most hardware stores.
Hose-bib vacuum breakers have been required by the Standard Plumbing Code since 1963.

Who should I contact for more information?
Summit Park PSD office staff and field technicians will be happy to answer your questions. Call 304-623-5304 or email customerservice@summitparkpsd.com