



**City of Rock Island
Public Works Department**

**Cross Connection Control Program
Frequently Asked Questions**

I received a Cross Connection Survey. What is this about?

The City of Rock Island is required to survey their water customers every two years. This survey is to identify and eliminate possible sources of cross connections to help ensure the safety of the public water supply. The information collected through the surveys helps to identify where backflow prevention devices may be needed as well as providing information on existing devices that may not have been previously submitted to the City.

What is cross connection?

Cross connection is a physical connection between a possible source of contamination and the public drinking water system piping. This connection, if not properly protected, can lead to the contamination of the drinking water system through a backflow event.

What is backflow?

Backflow is the reversal of water flow through a cross connection from a possible source of contamination into the public drinking water system. Backflow may be caused by either backpressure or back siphonage. A loss of pressure in the public drinking water system may lead to back siphonage through unprotected cross connections or backpressure may be created when the water pressure of a facility's internal water system is elevated above the supply pressure of the public drinking water system resulting in backflow through unprotected cross connections.

What can I do to prevent backflow situations in my home or business?

- Be aware of and eliminate and/or isolate cross connections.
- Maintain air gaps on sinks and when using hoses.
- Do not submerge hoses or place them where they could become submerged.
- Use hose bib vacuum breakers on fixtures (hose connections in the basement, laundry room, and on outside faucets/spigots).
- Install approved backflow prevention devices on lawn irrigation systems and on fire sprinkler system services.
- Do not create a connection between auxiliary water system (well, cistern, body of water) and the water supply plumbing.

Who is responsible?

The responsibility for preventing backflow is divided. In general, state and local plumbing inspectors have authority over plumbing systems within buildings while state regulatory agencies and public water suppliers regulate protection of the distribution system at each service connection.

Water customers have the ultimate responsibility for properly maintaining their plumbing systems.

It is the water customer's responsibility to ensure that unprotected cross connections are not created and that any required backflow prevention devices are tested in accordance with state requirements and maintained in operable condition.

Why should I be concerned?

Backflow may affect the quality of the drinking water at your facility and has the potential to create health hazards if contaminated waters enters your water supply plumbing system and is used for drinking, cooking, or bathing.

Backflow events occur more often than you might think although most do not create health hazards.

Unprotected cross connections with water supply plumbing or public drinking water piping systems are prohibited.

You are responsible for protecting your water supply plumbing from backflow that may contaminate your drinking water and the drinking water of others. This includes complying with the plumbing code and not creating unprotected cross connections.

Who is responsible for having the backflow device tested?

It is the responsibility of the property owner to have the backflow device tested by a qualified tester. It is also the responsibility of the property/business owner to schedule their own test appointment.

Who tests backflow devices?

While any Illinois licensed plumber can inspect plumbing or install a backflow device, only an Illinois Cross Connection Control Device Inspector (CCCDI) can test the device.

Where can I find a list of qualified testers in my area?

The City of Rock Island has partnered with BSI Online to assist in administering the Cross Connection Control Program. To locate a list of testers in the area, please visit the BSI Online website at www.bsionlinetracking.com.

I have an in-ground lawn sprinkler system at my residence. Am I required to have a backflow device and have it tested?

In-ground sprinkler systems are required to have a reduced pressure principle backflow prevention device installed on the water line servicing the system. The backflow device must also be tested annually in accordance with the state testing requirements.

Who pays for the testing and how much does it cost?

It is the responsibility of the property owner to pay for any testing and/or required repairs to the backflow device. Cost will vary with existing device location conditions and type of device. Please review pricing requirements with selected test company/tester before having the test performed.

Will this cause disruption in my water service?

Testing does require the flow of the water to be stopped through the backflow device during the test process resulting in a short service interruption. The testing can be scheduled through the test company/tester for a time that will be convenient for the property owner.

How often do I have to have my backflow device tested?

Backflow devices are required to be tested upon installation and at annual intervals thereafter.

Do I submit the test to the City of Rock Island or does the test company/tester do this for me?

The test company/tester will submit the completed test form(s) for their clients. BSI Online will issue a Customer Confirmation Number (CNN) to use when reports have been submitted at www.bsionlinetracking.com. You may also use this e-mail to verify when your backflow test has been filed, locate a list of testers in the area, or to simply learn more about backflow.

If I cannot get my device tested in time to meet the required deadline what should I do?

Since the City of Rock Island has partnered with BSI Online, BSI Online will be responsible for keeping track of all backflow device inspection forms. Please contact BSI Online at 1-800-414-4990 or e-mail bsionline@backflow.com to discuss possible extensions and/or resolutions.