

Contamination from Cross-Connections

Backflow of water from a customer's plumbing into the public water system has the potential to contaminate public drinking water and cause health concerns. Backflow can occur if a cross-connection exists between the public water system and other water or chemical-filled systems, such as lawn irrigation, commercial heating/cooling, and fire sprinkler systems.

To help ensure cross-connections on residential properties do not contaminate the drinking water supply, residential customers should:

1. Ensure that backflow prevention devices protect irrigation systems and that the devices are inspected annually to ensure they are working properly.
2. Keep water hoses out of buckets and pools of water, including swimming pools. Under certain conditions, the hose may siphon pool chemicals or contaminated water into the public water system.
3. Disconnect garden hoses attached to a chemical sprayer as soon as the work is completed.

The Henrico County public water system is protected from cross-connection contamination by backflow prevention devices at industrial, commercial, and institutional facilities. The Department of Public Utilities monitors these facilities to ensure that all of these devices are working properly. We ask each residential customer to provide the same level of safety by following the recommendations listed above.

For more information, contact the Department of Public Utilities' Water Quality Engineer at (804) 727-8700, or visit our Web site (www.co.henrico.va.us/utility), or the American Backflow Prevention Association (www.abpa.org).