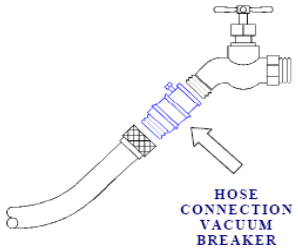
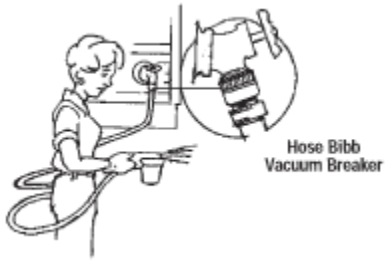
HOW TO COMPLY

The Whitinsville Water Company asks all members implement the recommendations outlined in this brochure. They are also happy to inspect service connections and plumbing upon request.

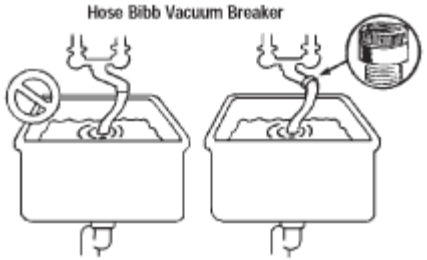


All homeowners should use hose bibb vacuum breakers on all outdoor spigots. They are available in many hardware stores, or can be purchased on-line from Home Depot or Amazon.com for less than $8.

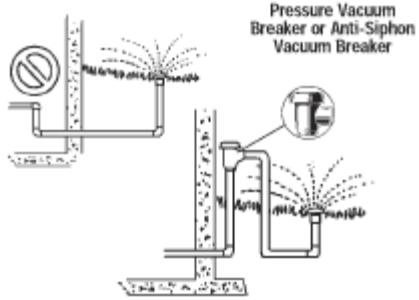
Residents are not allowed to immerse any type of hose or



faucet fixture that is attached to the home's plumbing unless it has its own backflow prevention device.



Anyone with an in-ground sprinkler or irrigation system will be required to have an approved, testable backflow prevention devices on lawn irrigation systems. They must also provide proof that the backflow prevention device has been inspected by a certified tester. Whitinsville Water Company provides this service.



Pursuant to Massachusetts Regulation 310 CMR 22.22, the Whitinsville Water Company, is permitted to conduct future inspections of residences connected to the water system and require the installation of backflow prevention devices as needed.

WHO DO I CONTACT TO ASK QUESTIONS OR REPORT BACKFLOW?

Contact the Whitinsville Water Company at 508-234-7358.

Whitinsville Water Company

Public Water System

Cross-Connection Control and Backflow Prevention Information for Residential Customers

WHAT IS BACKFLOW?

Water systems depend on water pressure to keep water flowing in the proper direction through the pipes. However, anything that causes a drop in water pressure can create a reverse flow from a homeowner's plumbing system back into the public water system. This is called **backflow**.

For example, if you have a garden hose submerged to fill a bucket, Jacuzzi, fish tank, etc., and the water system suddenly loses pressure, the flow of water can be reversed, sucking any contaminants in that water backwards into the system.

A **cross-connection** is any physical connection between a possible source of contamination and the public water system. For example, if a homeowner uses a cistern or an old well for outdoor watering, it cannot in any way be connected to pipes that are connected to the public water system. Even with a valve in place, it is illegal.

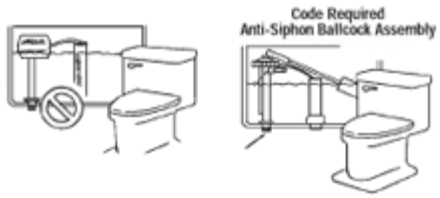
WHAT ARE EXAMPLES OF CROSS-CONNECTIONS AND BACKFLOW SCENARIOS?

- Soapy water or other cleaning compounds backsiphoned into your water supply plumbing through a faucet or hose submerged in a bucket or laundry basin.
- A hose submerged in a swimming pool creates a pathway for pool water to enter your water supply plumbing.
- Fertilizers/pesticides backsiphoned into your water supply plumbing through a garden hose attached to a fertilizer/ pesticide sprayer.
- Chemicals/pesticides and animal or bird droppings drawn into your water supply plumbing from a lawn irrigation system with submerged nozzles.
- Bacteria/chemicals/additives present in a boiler system backsiphon into the water supply plumbing.
- A connection made between a private well supply and the water being supplied by a public water system through the water supply plumbing.

NEVER submerge a hose connected to the water system.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PREVENT BACKFLOW?

- Be aware of and eliminate cross-connections.
- Maintain air gaps. 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 outside).
- Make sure toilets have anti-siphon ballcock assemblies.
- Install approved, testable backflow prevention devices on lawn irrigation systems.
- Install an approved, testable backflow prevention device at your home's water service connection.
- Do not create a connection between an auxiliary water system (well, cistern, body of water) and the water supply plumbing.



WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

In Massachusetts, the responsibility for preventing backflow is divided. In general, state and local plumbing inspectors have authority over plumbing systems within buildings while Massachusetts DEP and 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 homeowner's or other customer's responsibility to ensure that cross-connections are not created and that any required backflow prevention devices are tested yearly and are in operable condition.

WHAT IS THE LAW?

Massachusetts Regulation 310 CMR 22.22 requires public water suppliers to protect their water systems from cross-connections and prevent backflow situations. Public water suppliers must conduct cross-connection control inspections of their water customers' property to evaluate cross-connection hazards.

If a homeowner is found to have a potential or actual cross-connection contamination hazard, the customer will be required to eliminate the hazard and/or install an appropriate backflow prevention device at the service connection and/or at the hazard.

WHY IS ALL THIS IMPORTANT?

Cross connection control is extremely important in public water systems as it is a matter of public health and safety. Most contamination issues in public water system are not due to the water supply, but due to cross connections. Therefore it is very important that all customers are aware of the dangers and take necessary precautions. If you have any questions regarding any of the information in this brochure, please contact our office at 508-234-7358 and we will be happy to assist you.