Backflow Information Links and Regulations

The Erie Water Works Cross-Connection Control Program was established in 1974 as mandated by the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA). The SDWA is a federal law that ensures the quality of Americans' drinking water. Under the SDWA, the Environmental Protection Agency sets standards for drinking water quality and oversees the states, localities, and water suppliers who implement those standards. To learn more about the SDWA, call the Safe Drinking Water Hotline at:

1-800-426-4791.

To learn more about Backflow Prevention visit:

EWW (Erie Water Works)
www.eriewater.org/engineering

USC (University of Southern California)
www.epa.gov/safewater/crossconnection.html

AWWA (American Water Works Association)
www.awwa.org

EPA (U. S. Environmental Protection Agency)
www. water.epa.gov/drink

PA DEP (Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection) www. dep.state.pa

ABPA (American Backflow Prevention Assoc.)
www.abpa.org

Erie Water Works
Cross-Connection Control

Engineering Services
Cross-Connection Control Supervisor
240 West 12th Street
Erie, PA 16501

Phone: 814-870-8000 Ext. 207 or 205
Fax: 814-870-8011
Email:
 backflowprevention@eriewaterworks.org
Web: www.eriewater.org

"World-Class Water, First-Class Service"

Erie Water Works Mission Statement

To guarantee a continuous, uninterrupted, reasonably priced supply of quality water to its customers which assures public health while promoting regional stability and future development

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Erie Water Works
Cross-Connection Control

The Erie Water Works Cross-Connection Control Program is dedicated to protecting the public water system through the elimination of cross-connections.

Cross-connections lead to the potential for Backflow. Backflow is the undesirable reversal of the normal flow of water in any pipeline or plumbing system.

Backflow is dangerous because it could result in drinking water becoming contaminated, unsafe, and unusable.
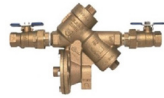
Frequently Asked Questions:

Q. What is a Cross-Connection?

A. Any connection (or potential connection) between a drinking water supply system and any source of non-potable or non-drinkable liquid, solid or gas. Cross-connections pose a serious public health hazard.

Q. What type of Backflow Protection do I need?

A. Any facility that has the potential for cross-connections requires a backflow preventer. The type of backflow preventer is determined by the potential Degree of Hazard. Degree of Hazard is determined by Erie Water Works (EWW).

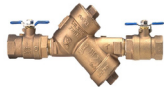### REDUCED PRESSURE BACKFLOW ASSEMBLY (RPBA)

Commercial, industrial, and institutional facilities such as manufacturing companies, offices, retail facilities, educational & government buildings, and facilities with lawn irrigation systems require RPBAs. They are primarily installed above ground with proper drainage & adequate heat for outside installations to prevent freezing.

DOUBLE CHECK DETECTOR ASSEMBLY (DCDA)

All Fire Protection systems require a DCDA regardless of size.

DOUBLE CHECK VALVE ASSEMBLY (DCVA)

DCVAs are used when one building is supplied by one water service tap with three or more residential units, such as apartment buildings, student housing, & public housing.

DUAL CHECK VALVE (DUCV) Non-Testable

Single family houses and two-unit residential buildings, unless otherwise identified as having a high hazard, require DUCVs. DUCVs are approved for below-grade installations.

Q. What are property owner responsibilities?

A. The property owner must hire a licensed and certified backflow tester to test the backflow assembly upon installation, when replacing or repairing, and every 12 months. The assemblies must be rebuilt every 5 years.

Q. Who can I hire to maintain my backflow preventer?

A. A list of EWW licensed backflow testers can be found on our website, www.eriewater.org/engineering. If the facility is within the City of Erie boundaries, the test must be performed under the direction of a licensed Master Plumber with the City of Erie and the test report must be signed by the Master Plumber. For areas outside of the City of Erie, any licensed backflow tester may perform the installation, tests and rebuilds.

Q. What types of common Cross-Connections are typically found?

- Portable Pressure Washers & Sprayer Hose Attachments
- Garden Hoses and Lawn Irrigation Systems
- Radiator Flush Kits
- Fire Sprinklers & Hydrant Connections
- Cooling & Heating Systems
- Utility Sinks
- Swimming Pools, Hot Tubs, & Spas
- Solar Heating Systems
- Chemical Feed Systems

Q. Will I receive a reminder to have my backflow assembly tested?

A. No. Reminder letters are only mailed if a backflow assembly has not been tested and/or rebuilt within 12 months of the last test. It is the property owner's responsibility to proactively comply with the EWW Cross-Connection Regulations. A Water Termination Notice will follow for all non-compliant facilities.

Q. What happens if I do not have the backflow assembly tested or rebuilt?

A. Water service will be shut off to any facility that requires but does not have a backflow preventer installed OR any facility that is delinquent with testing and/or rebuilds.

Q. How long do I have to comply with installation of a new backflow assembly or testing of an existing one?

A. After receiving the initial compliance letter, property owners have 45 days to have an EWW approved backflow preventer installed. If a reminder letter is sent for the testing/rebuilding of an existing backflow assembly, the results are due within 30 days of the date of the letter.

Q. Is the Customer responsible for submitting the Backflow Test Results?

A. No. The Certified Backflow Tester must submit the results to EWW within 10 days of conducting the test. It is recommended that the property owner retain a copy of the test results.

Q. Why do backflow assemblies have to be tested periodically?

A. Backflow assemblies have internal seals, springs, and moving parts that are subject to fouling, wear, or fatigue. Annual tests ensure that they are functioning properly.