

Protect Your Drinking Water

The Department of Public Works delivers safe drinking water to all residents and businesses in Watertown. The Department is responsible for proper maintenance and testing to insure that water meets all of the strict standards established by state and federal regulations.

Residents and other users also have a responsibility to keep our water safe. The best way to protect our water is by preventing cross-connections and backflow.



Vacuum breaker shown installed on hose bib connection.

Prevent Cross-connections and Backflow

What is a Cross-connection?

A cross-connection is a connection between the drinking water system and a source of pollution. Pollution sources can be found in many places in your home, including pools, tubs, lawn irrigation system, boilers, auxiliary wells, solar heat systems, fire sprinklers, and pesticide spray applicators. Over half of cross-connections in the United States involve unprotected garden hoses.

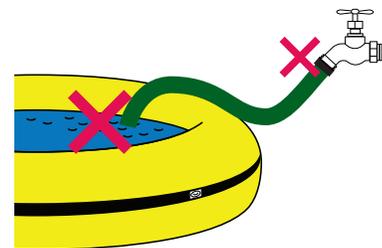


What is Backflow?

Backflow can occur during a loss of pressure in the water distribution system such as when large amounts of water are used to fight a fire or during a main break. The loss of pressure can create a vacuum that can pull water through cross-connections into the drinking water system.

Examples of Cross-Connections and Backflow

Filling a wading pool with the end of the hose submerged. A loss in pressure can cause the pool water to flow back into the drinking water system. Solution—Install a low cost vacuum breaker on the hose bib connection and do not submerge hose when filling pool.



Applying fertilizer to lawn using a sprayer on a garden hose. A loss of pressure can cause the fertilizer to flow back into the drinking water system. Solution—Install a low cost vacuum breaker on the hose bib connection.

What can you do to help?

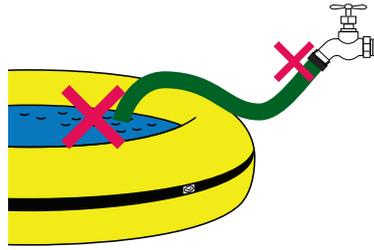
- Install low cost vacuum breakers on all inside and outside hose connections. Vacuum breakers are available at most local hardware stores and plumbing supply companies. The typical cost is less than \$10 and they can be installed in just a few minutes.
- Keep the end of hoses clear of potential contaminants —maintain an “air gap”
- Have lawn irrigation systems checked and backflow devices tested annually.
- Use double check valve assemblies and reduced pressure backflow devices where appropriate to prevent backflow from building sprinklers, boilers, etc.
- When in doubt contact the water department or plumbing inspector.



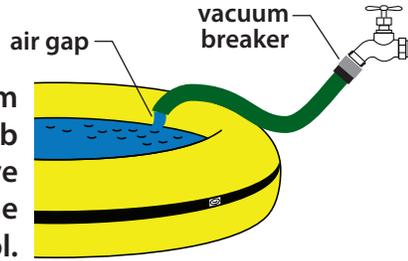
Vacuum breaker

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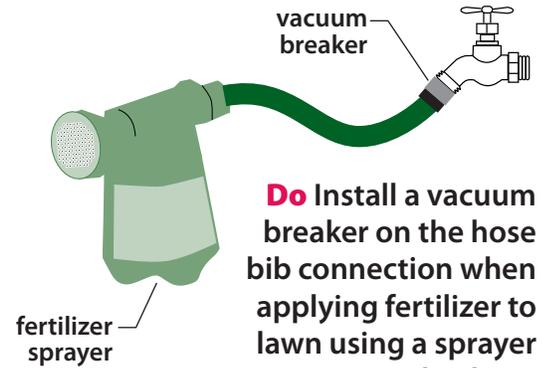
Don't fill a wading pool with the end of the hose submerged.



Do install a vacuum breaker on the hose bib connection and leave an air gap between the hose and pool.



Prevent Cross-connections and Backflow



Do Install a vacuum breaker on the hose bib connection when applying fertilizer to lawn using a sprayer on a garden hose



This Program is sponsored by:
Town of Watertown, Department of Public Works
124 Orchard Street, Watertown, MA 02472

**For Additional Information call us
at 617-972-6420**

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