

COMMISSIONERS:
JEFF DAVIS
REBECCA HUNTER
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GENERAL MANAGER:
GREGORY K. BUTLER

To: Hixson Utility Customer

Subject: Backflow Preventer Requirements

Hixson Utility District has a responsibility to protect our community's natural water source as well as all persons consuming the District's drinking water. This responsibility requires us to make sure that adequate safeguards are in place to prevent contamination to our water source and your drinking water. As a District customer, we ask that you follow the standards we have adopted in our policies that follow current industry standards and rules provided by agencies such as the EPA, TDEC, and AWWA. Please take time and review the following information and the requirements for a variety of scenarios to make sure you are taking the necessary steps to protect your household's drinking water, your neighbor's water, and the public water distribution system.

Risks vary from location to location, but both residences and business provide situations that can result in backflow of contaminants into the public water system. In businesses and residences, any direct connection between plumbing and a device that contains non-potable water can introduce risk of contaminations. For example, in businesses, devices such as soda fountains, salon stations, fire sprinkler systems, lawn sprinkler systems, and medical devices have direct connections with the potable water piping and without a backflow device installed under certain circumstances contaminants from those devices can siphon back into the drinking water provided by the public water system. Residences provide risks from lawn irrigation systems, wells, swimming pools, and yard hydrants. In protecting the public water system, at no time shall a private well be connected to plumbing that is connected to the public water system. If your residence has a private well connected to the house plumbing that is also served by a water service meter there is a high risk of cross contamination that could pose a health risk to others. This high risk is the reason for the requirement of all wells to be detached from plumbing connected to the public water system.

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If you are operating a business, you are required to have at minimum a reduced pressure backflow assembly installed by a plumber following the acceptable installation design of the assembly. This device needs to be installed on each service line to a customer's water system at or near the property line or immediately inside the building being served if it is within 40ft of the property line; but, in all cases, before the first branch line leading off the service line. For devices that are outside they will need to be above ground in a weatherproof enclosure prior to the first device connection.

If you have water service at a residence and have a lawn meter a reduced pressure backflow assembly is required prior to the first sprinkler head, faucet, or swimming pool location within 40 feet of the meter. This assembly will need to be located above ground and in a weatherproof enclosure. These devices are required to be tested annually by a State of Tennessee certified backflow tester. The device must be repaired if the test results show a failing device and retested. These tests are required to be submitted to Hixson Utility District for our records in compliance with rules governing backflow programs at public water utilities. The District employs a backflow program administrator that can answer your questions regarding these required testing for your convenience.

Hixson Utility District would like to thank you for helping us protect the public water system so we may continue to serve you with great water at a reasonable cost. If you have additional questions please call (423)805-3670 or email Hannah Smith at hsmith@hixsonutility.com.

Regards,

Hannah Smith
Backflow Administrator