

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS...

What is Backflow?

Backflow is the undesirable reversal of flow of water or other substances into the potable water distribution system.

What are the causes of Backflow?

There are two conditions that cause backflow. They are back pressure and back siphonage.

Back pressure is when the pressure is greater on the user's side of the system than on the supply side.

Back siphonage occurs when there is a sudden loss of supply pressure that causes a vacuum or partial vacuum on the user's side.

What should I do if my backflow prevention assembly is stolen?

If your backflow prevention assembly is stolen, please contact us at 901-528-7757 to inform us of the theft so the record may be noted. Then contact the Memphis Police Department (Salvage Yard detective) at 901-636-3264 and report the theft. When you replace the device, please make sure your licensed plumber tests the assembly after installation. A copy of the test and maintenance report must be submitted to Code Enforcement which will be forwarded to our office.

How often is my backflow device required to be tested?

Reduced Pressure (RP) Assemblies are required to be tested upon installation, after cleaning or repairs have been made and at least annually.

Commercial and industrial customers who have **Double Check Valve Assemblies** must have their devices tested semi-annually, as well as after installation and repairs or cleaning.

All Double Check Valve Assemblies on fire systems are required to be tested semi-annually. **Reduced Pressure (RP) Assemblies on fire systems** are required to be tested annually. Please note that in addition, both assemblies are required to be tested after new installation or replacement and after any repairs or cleaning.

Commercial and industrial customers who have **Pressure Vacuum Breakers** are required to have their devices tested annually. In addition, pressure vacuum breakers are required to be tested after installation or replacement and after any repairs or cleaning. However, the test results are not required to be submitted to our office. A log of the results should be kept at that facility and will be subjected to review by our office periodically.

What are the consequences if I do not have my reduced pressure backflow preventer tested annually?

Failure to do so may result in an interruption of water service. If the water service is disconnected, you may be subject to a reconnect fee. In addition, before water service will be restored, your certified backflow tester must call our office to verify the testing appointment. Someone *must* be at the premise at the time of water service restoration.

Is any type of backflow protection required for fire protection systems?

Yes. For classes 1, 2 (and sometimes class 3) fire systems which do not have any type of contaminant injected into the line, a Double Check Valve Assembly is required. For classes 4, 5 and 6 fire systems (which do have anti-freeze, foamite and other chemicals injected into the line), a Reduced Pressure (RP) Assembly is required.

Double Check Valve Assemblies on fire systems are required to be tested semi-annually. Reduced Pressure (RP) Assemblies on fire systems are required to be tested annually. Please note that in addition, both assemblies are required to be tested after new installation or replacement and after any repairs or cleaning.

How do I submit my test and maintenance report to the Cross Connection Board?

Test reports may be submitted via: Fax: 901-528-4658
Email: crossconnection@mlgw.org Mail: P.O. Box 430, Memphis, TN 38101
or Hand carry to: 220 S. Main Street, Memphis, TN 38103.

How can I contact your office?

Our telephone contact number is 901-528-7757. Our office hours are Monday thru Friday from 6:30 to 3:00 p.m.

When is my lawn irrigation system due to be tested?

Your lawn irrigation system must be tested annually by a certified backflow prevention assembly tester **at spring start-up**.

Who can I get to test my reduced pressure backflow prevention assembly?

All testable backflow prevention assemblies must be tested by an active Tennessee certified backflow prevention assembly tester approved to test on MLGW's system. A complete list of Backflow Testing Companies Approved To Test On MLGW's Distribution System is found on our website. Each company has active certified tester(s) approved by the Memphis and Shelby County Cross Connection Board. For any additional verification please contact us at 901-528-7757.

How will I know if the tester's certification is active and if he /she is approved to test my device?

In addition to reviewing the list of Backflow Testing Companies Approved to Test on MLGW's Distribution System, which is found on our website, you may contact the MLGW Cross Connection Section at 901-528-7757 to confirm a tester's certification is valid and active.

What if I wish to have my backflow prevention assembly removed?

If you wish to have your backflow prevention assembly removed, please contact MLGW's Cross Connection Section at 901-528-7757 and request an inspection to see if your current water use practices still require the protection. If it is determined that you no longer require the protection, you should have a licensed plumber obtain a permit from Memphis and Shelby County Department of Code Enforcement to remove the device and complete the test report indicating that the device has been removed. The plumbing permit number as well as the device information must be on the form. After the report is received by our office, we will update the record.

What if I decide not to operate my irrigation system during any given year, will I be exempt from having my backflow preventer tested for that year?

It is a Tennessee state law that all backflow prevention assemblies in the water distribution system must be tested on an annual basis. All irrigation devices are scheduled with a test due between March 1st and June 28th. Unless you have a device removed by a licensed plumber, it must be tested during that time. New installs, repairs, and replacements must be tested at time work is done.

Can I use a roof top irrigation system for my lawn? If so, what type of backflow protection is required?

Yes. You may use a roof top irrigation system. An RP is required to protect against backflow of contaminants.

Is it legal for me to install an irrigation system purchased from the local hardware store from my sill cock?

Actually, the application for such a system is considered to be an indirect cross connection. However, for that type of application, a solid piped connection is required and a reduced pressure backflow prevention assembly is required for backflow protection.

How do I protect my lawn irrigation system from the hazards of freezing temperatures?

You should protect your reduced pressure backflow preventer with an insulated box cover. Each zone of your system should be winterized including your backflow prevention assembly. Please contact your lawn care professional for this service.