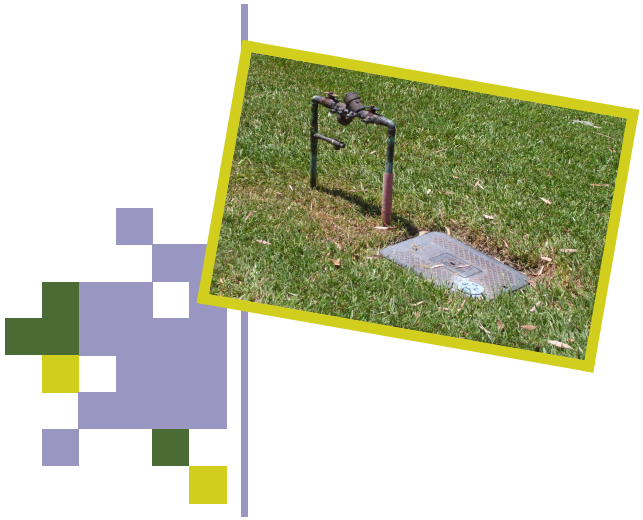
Providing safe drinking water to Longboat Key is our highest priority. Regulated by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, we follow strict standards to ensure that the public drinking water supply remains safe.

Our customers also have a responsibility to help keep the public water supply safe. Here's how: Your water service connection(s) must be equipped with a backflow prevention assembly by **December 31, 2008.**



What is cross-connection?
Cross-connections are connections between drinking water and other water or fluids of unknown quality. Our program is designed to help identify and prevent cross-connections. A backflow preventer is required at each water service connection. If your water piping is connected to a source of water of undrinkable fluid, a cross-connection has occurred.

Indirect cross-connections are made by garden hoses and temporary connections that may be connected for only a few minutes.

Direct cross-connections are more permanent hard-pipe arrangements.

What is backflow?
Backflow is the backward flow of water through a pipe. The normal direction of water flow is from the utility water main to homes or businesses. The backflow of water from home plumbing systems into community drinking water happens when water is pulled backward due to a pressure loss in the utility main pipe or pushed back by a pressure source like a well pump.

For more information

If you have questions about backflow preventers or cross-connection control, contact the **Longboat Key Public Works Department at 941.316.1988**.

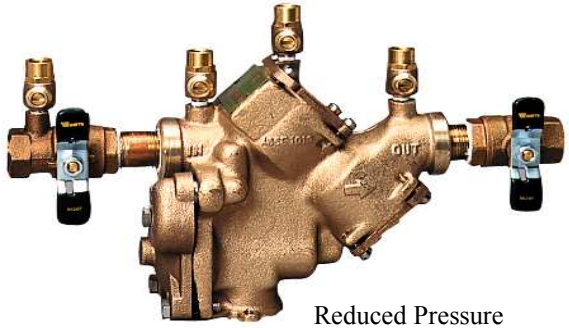
TOWN OF LONGBOAT KEY

Cross-Connection Control Program

BACKFLOW PREVENTION

Maintaining the integrity of your public drinking water system

Double Check



Reduced Pressure

Longboat Key Backflow prevention

Types of backflow

Back siphonage creates a vacuum as water drains toward the community water system. Water or fluid can be siphoned or pulled into the utility main water line. Example: a garden hose with one end immersed in a pail of soapy water or a hose immersed in a swimming pool.

Back pressure can develop when the pressure at the delivery point is higher than the supply pressure. Example: Irrigation well pumps are connected to drinking water for pump priming or blending drinking water with well water to reduce a "rotten egg" odor.

Why are preventers needed?

Backflow prevention assemblies are designed and installed to prevent the flow of water backwards through a pipe by reducing water pressure on the property owner side of the water meter. The Town requires each service connection to be equipped with a preventer to protect the public drinking water system from backflow.

Commonly asked questions

What is a cross connection control prevention program?

It is a program required by the State of Florida to detect and prevent possible sources of non-drinking water from entering your public utility drinking water system.

How can this happen?

Contamination of drinking water is usually the result of cross-connections of piping between your drinking water and some other source such as an irrigation well or pond. The American Water Works Association estimates over 100,000 cross-connections occur each day—half of these from garden hoses.

Who is required to have a backflow prevention assembly?

Longboat Key Ordinance 2007-29 requires a backflow prevention assembly on each water service connection by **December 31, 2008.**

Who owns the backflow assembly?

The assembly is owned by the property owner. The property owner is required to maintain the assembly in proper working condition.

How do I know if I have a preventer?

Backflow prevention assemblies are typically located just behind the water meter at the property line. Typical assemblies are depicted throughout this brochure. If you have difficulty determining whether you have a backflow prevention assembly, contact Public Works at 941.316.1988 for additional assistance.

What do I do if I do not currently have a preventer on my water service connection(s)?

You will need to hire a licensed plumbing contractor to install one for you prior to **December 31, 2008.** Installation prices will vary. You may wish to acquire multiple quotes.

What maintenance is required for a backflow prevention assembly?

The Town will be testing customer's assemblies on an annual basis. The cost of this test will be incorporated into the water rates. If the assembly fails the annual test, the Town will notify the property owner via letter. The property owner would then be required to have a licensed plumbing contractor repair the assembly.

What will happen if I do not have a preventer installed?

The Town can exercise the right to turn off your water service until a backflow prevention assembly is installed.

Why does this assembly need to be installed in the front of my house?

In order to protect the Town's water system as much as possible and meet state requirements, the backflow preventer needs to be installed as close to the water meter as possible.

Can I cover or hide the backflow preventer?

Yes, there are several methods to cover and protect the backflow prevention assembly. Some local companies sell backflow covers that disguise the assembly to look like a rock. Other options are available. Simple landscaping can draw attention away from the assembly. However, no installation or maintenance of any fixed objects will be permitted within three feet of the assembly to facilitate maintenance and annual inspection.

Why do preventers need to be tested every year?

The backflow assembly is a mechanical device that needs maintenance just like a car. The annual test indicates if the internal check valves and mechanics are working properly and protecting your water. The Town will test your backflow.

My backflow preventer sometimes leaks water from a relief valve. Can I remove or plug the valve to prevent water loss?

The relief valve is installed to prevent water pressure from building up too high when the water in a water heater expands. The relief valve can be replaced with a small expansion tank that does not leak. Plugging or removing the relief valve could cause damage to your water heater or plumbing.

Who do I contact with backflow prevention questions?

Contact the Public Works Department at 941.316.1988.

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