



### **Cross Connection and Backflow**

The state, in the California Code of Regulations, Title 17, Public Health Sections 7583 through 7605, require customers and the water provider to protect the public water supply from contamination. As part of the water providers responsibility to protect the public water supply, it is required that customers install a backflow protection device if a cross-connection exists or is likely to exist, and that this device is tested annually.

**Cross connections** are actual and potential unprotected connections between a potable water system and any other unapproved water.

**Backflow** is the reverse flow of water through a cross connection and back into the distribution system. Backflow occurs when there is either backpressure or backsiphonage. Backpressure is when unapproved water has a higher pressure than the water in the distribution system. This can occur when there are pumps or boilers connected to the distribution system. Backsiphonage is when there is negative pressure on the water distribution side causing water to be siphoned back into the distribution system. This can happen when there is a main break or a hydrant is used for firefighting. Though rare, backflow occurrences do happen and have caused serious health issues. Thankfully, West San Martin Water Works have not had any issues related to backflow occurrences. To continue to have safe water every customer needs to ensure not to create unprotected cross connections and that any required backflow prevention devices are tested in accordance with state requirements and are maintained.

#### **Ways to prevent backflow occurrences:**

- Eliminate cross connections
- Do not submerge hoses or place them where they may become submerged. e.g. pools, buckets, water troughs
- Use hose bib vacuum breakers.
- Make sure to install an approved backflow prevention device if your property has a well, a fire sprinkler system, or an in-ground irrigation system. Other threats may require an approved backflow prevention device. Approved devices differ depending on situation.

**In order to protect the public water system, failure to comply with regulations can result in water service disconnection.**

If you have any questions please call the office at 408-683-2098.