

# BACKFLOW PREVENTION FACT SHEET

The City of Vaughan's Backflow Prevention Program protects public health and the quality of the City's drinking water by ensuring the appropriate installation and maintenance of backflow prevention devices. This program supports compliance with the highest industry drinking water protection standards and codes to ensure public safety while maintaining the quality of water by protecting the City of Vaughan's water distribution system.

## What is a backflow prevention program and a backflow prevention device?

Backflow prevention programs ensure potable water flowing throughout a city's water distribution system is protected against possible contamination due to cross connections that are present within water plumbing systems. Backflow prevention devices are mechanical valves that work to prevent water from flowing in the wrong direction.

## What is backflow?

Backflow is the undesired reversal flow of water within a plumbing system. This undesired flow can occur two ways:

**Back siphonage:** This can occur when there is a reduction of pressure in the watermain caused by fire hydrant use or a nearby watermain break. This results in the water within nearby facilities being forced backwards and into the drinking water system.

**Back pressure:** This can occur when water pumps or elevated storage tanks create a higher pressure in the service line than what is being supplied. This results in the water within that facility being forced backward and into the drinking water system.

## What is a cross connection?

A cross connection is any potential or actual connection between a drinking water system and any source of pollution or contamination.

Some examples of common cross connections are:

- garden hose
- water softener
- water heating systems
- auxiliary water supply
- irrigation systems
- fire protection systems

## What is premise isolation?

Premise isolation occurs when a backflow prevention assembly is installed at or near the water meter, prior to any other plumbing connections. This protects the city's water distribution system from possible backflow contamination.

For more information and to review the Backflow Prevention By-law, visit [vaughan.ca/WaterBackflow](http://vaughan.ca/WaterBackflow).

If you have any questions, please contact our Backflow Prevention Team at 905-832-2281, ext. 6183 or [backflow@vaughan.ca](mailto:backflow@vaughan.ca).

