
BACKFLOW FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (revision date: 1/26/16)

Q: What is backflow, and why is it dangerous?

A: Reversal of water flow from an unapproved source to the public water supply. Backflow can carry pollutants and contaminants.

Q: What is an unapproved source?

A: Any water source NOT approved by NC Department of Environment, Health, and Natural Resources (NCDENR) for quality and safety. This includes some residential and commercial connections.

Q: Why is the backflow program needed?

A: In accordance with the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act, North Carolina Administrative Code, NC Plumbing and Building Codes, all water suppliers shall have a program to eliminate potential and actual cross-connections.

Q: What is a backflow prevention device?

A: A mechanical device that separates approved and unapproved water sources. It prevents contamination in a backflow situation.

Q: What systems require backflow prevention devices?

A: Backflow devices are required, but not limited to the following:

- Residential and commercial lawn irrigation systems
- Fire suppression systems
- Chemical plants with industrial manufacturing
- Medical and dental treatment facilities
- Commercial launderers
- Pest control facilities
- Schools
- Swimming pools
- Other establishments that, by building code, use equipment that potentially causes backflow and those listed in the Town backflow ordinance.

Q: Who can install or test a backflow preventer?

A: Only technicians who have passed a North Carolina approved certification course may install, test, and maintain backflow preventers.

Q: Who is subject to the new ordinance?

A: All customers connected to the Town of Southern Pines water distribution system.



Q: When must customers be in compliance?

A: Immediately, but no penalties will be assessed until January 1, 2017.

Q: Does my backflow preventer need to be placed in an enclosure (hot box)?

A: Yes, all exterior backflow devices are required to be in a protective, above-ground box.

Q: How often does my backflow device need to be tested?

A: Upon installation or reinstallation, after any maintenance, and annually thereafter. If you remove your backflow device for the winter, it must be retested after it is reinstalled.

Q: What do I do with the test results?

A: Residents should keep a copy for themselves, and ensure that the backflow technician contacts BSI Online and have the test data placed in their online system.

PHONE: 1-800-414-4990

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After your information is in this database, residents will be assigned their customer confirmation number (CCN). They can use this number to ensure their device is listed on the BSI website.

Q: Where do I install the backflow preventer?

A: Devices must be installed within ten (10) feet of the water meter. New lawn irrigation systems installed after July 1, 2009 must be on a separate meter. Some exceptions may be allowed for fire suppression systems or where installation is not feasible due to facility design. ALL exceptions will be reviewed by Town officials to make FINAL determination.