Why do I need my “Backflow Prevention Assembly” tested annually?

As with everything that is manufactured, Backflow Prevention Assemblies and Devices break or wear out. By having your Backflow Prevention Assembly tested annually, you will help to ensure that the potable water supply remains safe.

Certified Backflow Assembly Testers in BC attend a rigorous training course, and are certified by the American Waterworks Association, British Columbia Section. Many of the Backflow Prevention Assemblies have been tested and approved by the University of Southern California, Foundation for Cross Connection Control and Hydraulic Research. Certified Testers can test all Backflow Prevention Assemblies.

For More Information contact:

British Columbia Water & Waste Association
Suite 221– 8678 Greenall Avenue
Burnaby, BC V5J 3M4
Tel 604-433-4389
Fax 604-433-9859
bcwwa@bcwwa.org

The Irrigation Industry Association of BC
2330 Woodstock Drive
Abbotsford B.C. V3G 2E5
Tel or Fax: (604) 859-8222
www.irrigationbc.com


*** See British Columbia Plumbing Code 1998 Clause 7.1.6.1.1
Introduction

The majority of sprinkler irrigation systems in the Province of British Columbia are connected to a potable (safe for drinking) water supply. This potable water supply could consist of a city water main, a well, or any other source of drinking water supplied by your local water purveyor. The connection of a sprinkler irrigation system with its maze of pipes, valves, and sprinkler heads to a potable water supply is called a Cross Connection.

Herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers, or animal feces may collect in cesspools of water around the sprinkler heads creating a potential for the contaminants to be drawn back through the sprinkler irrigation system. This flow of contaminants (by means of Backflow or Backsiphonage) into the potable water supply line, Without an approved means of cross connection control, will result in contamination of the potable water supply.

What is Potable Water?

Potable water is water, which is safe for human consumption, free from harmful or objectionable materials, as described by the health authority.

What is a Cross Connection?

A cross connection is any actual or potential physical connection between a potable water line and any pipe, vessel, or machine containing a non-potable fluid or has the possibility of containing a non-potable fluid, such that it is possible for the non-potable fluid to enter the water system by backflow. A cross connection could be any physical arrangement whereby a potable water supply is connected directly or indirectly, with any non-potable or unapproved water supply system, sewer, drain, conduit, pool, storage reservoir, plumbing fixture, or any other device which contains, or may contain, contaminated water, liquid, gases, sewage, or other waste, of unknown or unsafe quality which may be capable of imparting contamination to the potable water supply as a result of backflow.

What is Backflow?

Backflow is the flow of water or other liquids, gases or solids from any source back into the customer’s plumbing system or the water purveyor’s water distribution system.

What is Backsiphonage?

Backsiphonage is backflow due to a negative or reduced pressure within the purveyor’s potable water supply.

Why do I need Cross Connection Control on my Sprinkler Irrigation System?

Everyone likes to feel that the potable water supply is safe and under control at all times. Unfortunately, this is not always true, and precautions are required to ensure the health and safety of all British Columbians.

It is a very real and constant danger that our potable water supply could become contaminated by something harmful to our health. As a result, minor skin irritation, serious health effects, or in some cases death may occur. For this reason Backflow preventers shall be selected, installed, maintained and field tested in conformance with CSA B64.10.

It is up to your local water purveyor to specify which type of backflow preventer to use. There are now many regions throughout B.C. using CSA as the approval organization. A Backflow Prevention Device (non testable) or Assembly (testable) are the most common.

Have your IIABC Certified Irrigation Contractor obtain all necessary permits and inspections on Your Sprinkler Irrigation Cross Connection as required. Please do your part to ensure that everyone can enjoy the benefits of safe drinking water and ensure the health and safety of everyone in British Columbia.