



INFRASTRUCTURE

BACKFLOW PREVENTION

The Water Supply Services policy aims to protect Council's water supply from a potential backflow event.

Backflow is the unintended reversal of water flow from a property back into Council's water main. This may occur when there is a sudden reduction in pressure in the reticulation.

This could occur if a pipeline breaks or the fire brigade pumps water out of Council's main to fight a fire. In industrial and commercial premises, this water may have been contaminated with chemicals used on the property so backflow can represent a serious health risk to Council's other customers.

Backflow prevention prevents this happening via the installation of appropriate devices on the water connection to the property. The backflow prevention device to be installed on a property is determined mainly by the activity carried out on site and the risk this activity poses.

For water services greater than 25mm, a backflow prevention device is normally installed in addition to the water meter assembly.

Council Policy requires the property owner to ensure that a backflow device is installed and is in working order.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is it a concern for Council ?

It is a concern for Council because this water may be contaminated with chemicals or whatever that is mixed with the water on the property.

If the contaminated water enters the reticulation it could be used by another customer causing health issues to the customer and liability issues for Council.

Why do I need to install a backflow prevention device?

All properties with a water connection must have a backflow prevention device in accordance with the Plumbing Code of Australia, some of which are testable devices. The property owner is responsible for installation of the backflow prevention device on their property.

Council will assign a default level of hazard based on an assessment of the primary activities being undertaken on site.

The backflow prevention device is to be fitted downstream of the fire or water service and is considered part of the internal plumbing.

The backflow prevention device is to be installed as containment protection as close to the point of connection to Council's water supply. If your property has more than one meter, a suitable backflow device will need to be installed for each meter.

You may wish to install additional devices within your property as zone or individual protection.

I understand there are several types of backflow prevention devices, so how do I know which is the best one for me?

The Policy is a risk based Policy. The business activity being undertaken on the property determines the hazard rating, which in turn determines the backflow prevention device.

Council's Policy will see a default hazard rating based on the business activity assigned to each premises. Council will use this default hazard assessment unless the property owner supplies specific information that would lead to assignment of a different hazard.

A licensed plumber with backflow prevention accreditation may also assist in determining the type of device required.

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HAZARD RATING

High hazard - Any condition, device or practice that, in connection with the drinking water supply system, has the potential to cause death. *Testable Device.*

Medium hazard - Any condition, device or practice that, in connection with the drinking water supply system, has the potential to endanger health. *Testable Device.*

Low hazard - Any condition, device or practice that, in connection with the drinking water supply system, constitutes a nuisance but does not endanger health or cause injury. *Non-Testable device*

You will be required to advise Council of any changes to the business activity undertaken on the property, so that the hazard rating may be reconsidered.

Device	Hazard Rating
Reduced Pressure Zone (RPZ)	High
Registered break tank/air gap	High
Testable double check valve	Medium
Testable double check detector assembly	Medium

What do these testable devices look like?



I have a testable backflow device, so how does the Policy affect me?

The Plumbing Code of Australia requires property owners to arrange testing of these devices every 12 months. A licensed plumber, who has completed additional training in backflow prevention, must undertake the test and forward the results to Council.

Who can I get to undertake the regular 12 monthly test of my backflow prevention device?

You need to engage a licensed plumber who has completed special NSW Government backflow prevention training.

Council maintains a list of these plumbers on its website.

www.dubbo.nsw.gov.au

What if the testing reveals maintenance is required or the device needs replacing?

Minor maintenance such as renewal of seals or springs could normally be carried out by the plumber when undertaking the testing. Under Council's Policy, ongoing maintenance, upgrade or replacement of the device is the responsibility of the property owner.

What happens if a property owner does not undertake testing of the backflow device when required to do so ?

Under Council's Policy, there is a number of enforcement options, from doing the work itself and charging the customer, to disconnecting the property from the water supply.

Why do I have to tell Council of changes in my business activity?

If the business activity changes within a premises, the hazard rating assigned may be affected. An accredited backflow licensed plumber should be engaged by the property owner to re-assess the hazard rating.

Disputing a Hazard Rating—There may be instances where the property owners disagree with the default hazard rating assigned to their premises. In this case, the property owner should engage an accredited backflow licenced plumber to re-assess the hazard rating and submit the proposal in writing to Council for approval.

Change of Hazard Rating—All requests to Council to review backflow prevention hazard ratings should be made by an approved plumber on behalf of their customer.

Please submit to Council and Application to Review Backflow Prevention Hazard Rating, along with any supporting information that may assist the claim.



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