



Protect Drinking Water

Understanding Cross-Connections

The Goleta Water District (District) is committed to delivering a reliable supply of quality water to the community. A key part of keeping water safe is protecting against cross connections that can contaminate clean water that is safe for drinking (potable water).

What are Cross-Connections?

Cross-connections are points in the water system where non-potable water sources (water unsafe for drinking) on a property could contact potable water. Examples of non-potable water sources include wash water in a bucket, swimming pools, landscape irrigation systems, pesticide and fertilizer sprayers, booster pumps, and other appliances and equipment that use water.

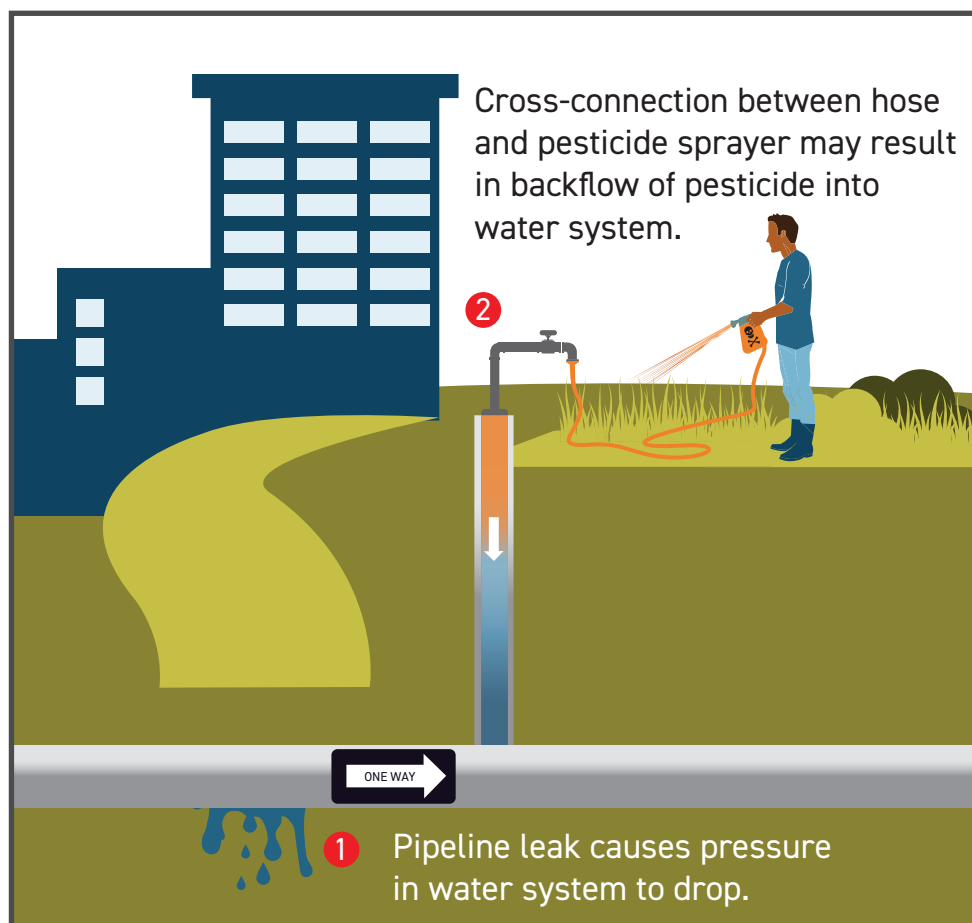
Unprotected cross-connections could allow contaminated water from private plumbing systems to backflow – or reverse flow – into the District’s water system. If that water has come into contact with any contaminants, it can pose a risk to the safety of the drinking water supply.

How Contamination Can Occur

Backflow is the reverse flow of water from a non-potable source into the potable water system, potentially contaminating drinking water. Backflow can occur at unprotected cross-connections due to pressure differences in two ways:

◆ **Backpressure:** When the pressure in a non-potable water source (such as a boiler) is greater than the pressure in the potable water system. Contaminants from the non-potable source can be pushed into the District’s water system. Buildings four or more stories high with booster pumps may generate backpressure.

◆ **Backsiphonage:** Where there is a sudden drop in the potable water system pressure, such as during firefighting or a water main break, or a damaged fire hydrant, a vacuum – or siphoning effect – can draw non-potable water and any contaminants present into your drinking water.



Cross-Connection Control Program

Cross-connection control protects against backflow of non-potable water sources into the public water system. This prevents contamination of drinking water. Cross-connections can be found in both residential and commercial plumbing systems. Examples include:

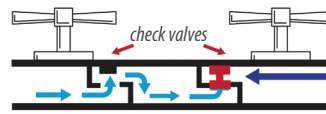
- ◆ Hose bibbs
- ◆ Commercial toilets
- ◆ Swimming pools and spas
- ◆ Fire sprinkler systems
- ◆ Recirculation or booster pumps
- ◆ Landscape irrigation systems
- ◆ Space heating boilers
- ◆ Secondary source of water such as a private well

Requirements for Property Owners

Property owners are responsible for cross-connection control on the private side of the meter. To prevent contaminants from entering your drinking water, approved backflow prevention assemblies may be required to protect against backflow at cross-connections. Backflow prevention assemblies stop the reverse flow of water into the public water system when pressure changes occur. After proper installation, the state requires that these assemblies be inspected and tested annually by approved testers. The District does not perform these inspections.

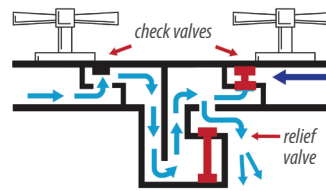
Examples of Backflow Preventers

Double Check Valve Assembly (DCVA)



When backflow occurs, spring loaded check valves close to create a seal and stop the water from flowing backwards.

Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Assembly (RPBA)



Spring loaded check valves close when backflow is present allowing contaminated water to drain out harmlessly from a relief valve.

Failure to comply with District backflow requirements could result in fines or discontinuation of your water service until proper cross-connection control is in place.

Keeping your drinking water safe: A Shared Responsibility

Do:

- Keep hoses stored safely and clear of contaminants
- Inspect your plumbing for potential unprotected cross-connections.
- Use approved backflow prevention assemblies to protect against backflow, and schedule inspection/testing when required.
- Contact the District if you notice changes in your water quality or suspect contamination of your drinking water.

Don't:

- Submerge hoses in pools, buckets, or other containers.
- Attach chemical dispensers, like pesticide sprayers, to hoses.
- Connect your drinking water system to an appliance without proper education on plumbing codes and any potential risks.

Visit www.goletawater.com/backflow for a list of certified backflow testers and additional program information, or contact the District's Cross-Connection Control Specialist at (805) 879-4642 or dvera@goletawater.com.



QR Code

For more information visit www.GoletaWater.com/backflow