

# What is a Cross-Connection?

A cross-connection is any actual or potential connection between our public water supply and a source of contamination or pollution.

All homes and businesses, due to their connection to our water system, are potential cross-connections. The water pipes and fixtures contained within your home or businesses may act as a conduit for contaminated or polluted water during conditions known as **backflow**.

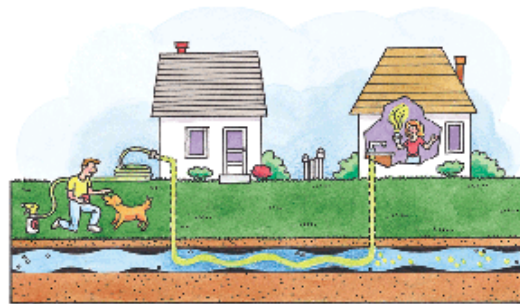


*Household cleaners submerged in water are just one example of a potential contaminant*

**Backflow** occurs when the pressure in the distribution system drops to a level that permits water to flow in the opposite direction of normal flows, pulling water from the customer's plumbing pipes and fixtures back into the distribution system. When backflow occurs, any other substance in contact with the customer's potable water system may also be drawn into the distribution system, creating a potential health hazard for water customers. Conditions that may cause backflow include water main breaks and large amounts of water use for fire-fighting purposes.

## Examples of Cross-Connections

- A garden hose with a fertilizer or chemical feeder connected to it that mixes the product with water as it is sprayed.
- A garden hose outlet submerged underwater, such as a hose lying in a pool or in a bucket of sudsy car-washing solution.
- A fire-suppression sprinkler system installed in a business.
- Water contained within a boiler or hot-water heating system.
- A home or business connected to both the distribution system and a well.
- An underground lawn sprinkler system
- A built-in pool or hot tub.
- A sink faucet or sprayer head submerged in a sink full of water.



*In this illustration, a backflow condition has caused lawn fertilizer to be drawn into the faucet of the neighboring home*

## What Are My Responsibilities?

The Woodfin Sanitary Water and Sewer District is committed to providing each of its customers the highest quality water possible. In order to meet this commitment, we require customers do their part to minimize the potential of contamination by observing the District's policies regarding cross-connections:

- All commercial operations must have proper backflow prevention devices in place as determined by the District
- New residential customers must have proper backflow prevention devices in place.
- Existing residential customers should minimize the conditions that can lead to contamination.
- Ensure that existing backflow prevention devices are operational and are tested by a certified backflow prevention specialist on an annual basis.
- Recognize that protection from cross-connections is not only District policy but is also the law in the State of North Carolina.

