

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

**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, or when the customer's pressure exceeds the pressure of 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 causing illness or even death for water customers. Conditions that may cause backflow include high pressure boilers and large amounts of water use for fire-fighting purposes.



## Examples of cross-connections:

- A water hose with a fertilizer or chemical feeder connected to it that mixes the product with water as it is sprayed.
- A water hose outlet submerged underwater, such as a hose lying in a tank of pesticides.
- A fire-suppression sprinkler system installed in a business.
- Water contained within a boiler.
- A business connected to both the distribution system and a well.
- An underground lawn sprinkler system
- A public swimming pool.
- A sink faucet or sprayer head submerged in a sink full of chemicals.
- A high pressure cooker or fountain drink dispenser



## What are my Responsibilities?

The City of Albemarle 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 City's policies regarding cross-connections:

- All commercial operations must have proper backflow prevention devices in place as determined by the City.
- Residential customers must have proper backflow prevention devices in place when a high hazard cross-connection exists.
- 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 The City of Albemarle policy but is also the law in the State of North Carolina.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the cross-connection coordinator.

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**THANK YOU FOR KEEPING  
OUR DRINKING WATER SAFE!**