

NEWS SPLASH

Autumn 2005

DISTRICT UPDATES CROSS CONNECTION WATER QUALITY PROGRAM

The Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District has the responsibility of providing its customers with water that meets federal and state drinking water standards. The District recently updated its Cross Connection Control Program in its increasing efforts to protect water quality and safeguard public health. The District Board of Commissioners approved the program revisions at the July 18, 2005 meeting. The Revised Code of Washington 43.20.050 and the Washington Administrative Code 246-290-490 provide the District with the authority to enforce practices and policies relating to cross connection control.

A cross connection is a point in a plumbing system where the potable water supply is connected to a non-potable source. Water is called "potable" (rhymes with "floatable") when it is considered safe to drink. Some examples of cross connections include irrigation systems, fire sprinkler systems and swimming pools. For example, irrigation systems are considered to be a cross connection hazard because of bacterial and chemical contaminants found on lawns that

could make their way into the public water system during a cross connection incident. Water normally flows in one direction, from the public water system into your home. In certain instances, such as a loss of pressure due to a water main break or withdrawal of water for fire protection, a vacuum is created and the non-potable water is pulled back into the public water system where it causes contamination.



A backflow prevention assembly is installed at points in a plumbing system where a cross connection could occur. These assemblies are required by state law to be tested upon installation and annually thereafter in order to ensure that they are functioning properly. The backflow prevention assemblies must be tested by a Washington State Certified Backflow Assembly Tester. Without proper backflow

protection, your irrigation or fire sprinkler system could endanger the health of your family, neighbors and others in the community who are using the public water system. If you have a backflow prevention assembly on your property, please make arrangements to have it tested as soon as possible and send a copy of the test results to the District. Our mailing address is 1510 - 228th Ave. SE, Sammamish, WA 98075, and our fax number is (425) 391-5389.

Your backflow prevention assembly is usually located in a box in the vicinity of your water meter.

For more information on cross connection, please visit the Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District's cross connection page at <http://www.sammplat.wa.org/crossconn.html>. You may also call the District's Cross Connection Control Specialist, Chic Nessler, at 425-392-4931 ext. 213 or email him at chic@sammplat.wa.org for further information.

HOW DO I SHUT OFF MY WATER DURING AN EMERGENCY?

You may want to consider locating your master valve before a problem occurs! Do you know where your master water supply valve is? In the event of an emergency, such as a burst pipe in your house, you will want to be able to locate this valve quickly in order to shut off your water right away. This will help prevent flooded basements and carpets and their associated headaches!

Take a few minutes to locate the master valve in your home. It's usually located where the water supply enters the home, and is often near the connections to your washing machine or water heater. It may be in a basement or crawl space. Once you've found what you think might be the correct valve, shut it off and turn on a faucet in your house to make sure you've found the right one. Then, mark the valve with a tag, a bright ribbon or colorful paint. The goal is to make the valve easy to spot right away. Take a minute or two and show your family where the master valve is. You'll be glad you took the time to prevent additional problems in the event of a water emergency!



Graphics courtesy City of Lima, Ohio Public Utilities

WINTERIZATION TIPS

- Disconnect and drain all hoses. Cover all hose bibs with protective coverings. Hose bib covers are inexpensive and can be purchased at most hardware stores.
- Insulate any pipes or faucets in unheated garages or crawl spaces.
- If you have an in-ground irrigation system, the water should be turned off and the system drained or blown out.
- Identify several plumbers in advance and keep their numbers handy in the event of an emergency.



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