

City of West Allis Department of Building Inspections & Neighborhood Services

7525 W. Greenfield Ave., West Allis, WI, bldginsp@westalliswi.gov

Phone: (414)302-8400 Fax: (414)302-8402



Cross-Connection Information

The City of West Allis is committed to providing quality water to our customers.

To help safeguard the public water system, the City of West Allis has implemented a Cross Connection Control Program, which includes the West Allis Revised Municipal Code Section 16.84(1) - (6).

What is a cross connection?

A cross connection is a direct or potential connection between the drinking water system and any water, gas, or other liquid not intended for human consumption. Water normally flows through your plumbing in one direction. Under certain conditions water can flow in the reverse direction. This is known as “backflow”.

The two typical ways backflow can occur are “backpressure” and “back-siphonage”.

Backpressure is created when a source of pressure, such as a boiler or a pressure washer, creates pressures higher than that supplied by the municipal water system. This can cause potentially contaminated water to be pushed into your plumbing system and the city supply through an unprotected cross connection.

Back-siphonage may occur when there is a loss of pressure in the water system during a fire emergency, a water main break, or a system repair. This can create a siphon in the plumbing system which can draw a liquid, such as pesticides, out of a container through an attached or submerged hose.

Inspections

The West Allis Water Utility and the Plumbing Inspector have been conducting cross-connection inspections of all of the City’s commercial, industrial, schools, and city buildings since 2004, and is now including residential properties into the process.

Revisions to State Code NR 810.15, require the water supplier to provide educational materials to its low hazard customers every three years, which includes most residential properties.

In addition to the educational materials which you will be receiving in your bills, we will be conducting inspections of residences in West Allis by appointment with the Plumbing Inspector or with the Water Utility at scheduled water meter change outs.

During a meter change out at the customer’s home, the utility’s service technician will be changing the water meter and if necessary, update the automatic meter reading system. In addition, the technician will go through a checklist to help the owner determine if there could be a cross-connection in their home.

The Plumbing Inspector or Utility's technician will visually inspect the basement area and the outside hose bibs. Other water devices being used in the house will not be inspected, unless the customer requests them to do so.

The West Allis Water Utility staff and the Plumbing Inspector will be available to assist the homeowner with any questions they may have regarding what they can do to protect their homes from cross-connection contamination.

Potential Hazards In The Home:

1. Boilers
2. Softeners and Reverse Osmosis systems
3. Laundry tubs, especially with attached hoses
4. Outside hose bibs, especially on homes built prior to 1976
5. Toilets
6. Lawn irrigation systems
7. Hand held shower heads.

No one method of protection is correct for all situations. If you need to purchase or replace any fixture in your home, make sure the product has the American Society of Sanitary Engineering (ASSE) symbol on the package or on the product.



Not all products found in your local store are acceptable in the state of Wisconsin; follow this link to see which products are approved for use in Wisconsin:

http://dsps.wi.gov/php/sb-ppalopp/prodcode_alpha_list.php#H

Some examples of toilet ballcock assemblies which are allowable in Wisconsin look like this:



Some examples of toilet ballcock assemblies which are **not** allowable in Wisconsin look like this:



If your toilet ballcock assembly is stamped ASSE #1002 it is approved for use in Wisconsin. If you need any further assistance with determining whether or not a device is acceptable, please contact the West Allis Water Utility at 414-302-8830 or the Plumbing Inspector at 414-302-8413.

Do's and Don'ts

Do:

- Prevent the end of any hose from being submerged in any sink, tub, or vessel connected to the sewer drain or a source of contamination.
- Ensure dishwashers are installed with the proper air-gap device (most newer systems have internal air-gaps). Contact the manufacturer if you have any questions.
- If you don't already have them, install hose bibb vacuum breakers (ASSE #1011) on all threaded faucets around your home.
- Ensure any water treatment system drain lines, such as from water softeners, have the proper air-gap of a minimum of 1 inch above the top of any drain or sink rim.
- Call the West Allis Water Utility or the Plumbing Inspector if you are in question about a water connection in your home which may be a backflow hazard.

Don't:

- Submerge kitchen sink, laundry tub, or shower hoses in buckets, pools, tubs, sinks, etc.
- Use spray attachments without a backflow prevention device.
- Use a hose to unplug blocked toilets or sewer piping.