

Name of policy:	Backflow Prevention		
Policy code:			
Adoption by Council:	13 March 2019	Minute number:	81/19
Last review date:	February 2019		
Review timeframe:	4 years		
Next scheduled review date:	February 2023		
Related legislation:	New South Wales Government <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> . New South Wales Government <i>Plumbing and Drainage Act 2011</i> . Australian and New Zealand Standard (AS/NZS 3500.1) <i>Plumbing and Drainage Part 1: Water Services</i> National Construction Code Series: Volume Three, Plumbing Code of Australia		
Association policies/documents:			
Responsible division:	Water Services		

Policy objective

This policy governs the process and requirements for the installation, testing and maintenance of backflow prevention devices. The policy is intended to ensure that public health risks are minimised through the installation of backflow prevention devices, with the purpose of this being to protect the quality of the potable water supply within Council's water reticulation system from unintended cross connection and backflow of contaminants.

This policy provides guidance to both staff and customers on the requirements for the installation, testing and maintenance of backflow prevention devices.

Policy statement

The installation of an appropriate backflow prevention device is required for each new and existing connected property in order to ensure that the Council's water supply network is protected against the backflow of contaminants into the network.

The Council will maintain a backflow prevention system which protects the integrity of the potable water supply network and the health and safety of customers.

Coverage of the policy

This policy applies to all properties connected to the Council's potable water supply network.

The policy outlines the requirements of both the Council and the property owner in relation to the installation, testing and maintenance of backflow prevention devices.

Legislative requirements

Provision for Council to undertake the actions and requirements as prescribed within this policy are defined within the following State Government Legislation, Australian Standards and Codes:

- New South Wales Government *Local Government Act 1993*.
- New South Wales Government *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2011*.
- Australian and New Zealand Standard (AS/NZS 3500.1) *Plumbing and Drainage Part 1: Water Services*
- National Construction Code Series: Volume Three, Plumbing Code of Australia

Strategic Plan link

Value – A connected community

- Continue to develop a sustainable network of water, sewer and storm water systems to meet community needs and health and safety standards

Policy content

- All properties connected to the Council's potable water supply network shall ensure that a backflow prevention device is installed in accordance with the provisions of the Australian and New Zealand Standard for Plumbing and Drainage Part 1: Water Services (AS/NZS 3500.1), the Plumbing Code of Australia and Council's connection requirements.
- The hazard rating of all properties connected to the potable water supply network must be determined by a licensed plumber with appropriate backflow accreditation in accordance with AS/NZS 3500.1.
- Where more than one activity or process occurs on the site, the property hazard rating will be equal to, or greater than, the highest identified hazard in accordance with AS/NZS 3500.1.
- Where the hazards are unknown for a commercial, industrial or mixed development, the hazard rating will default to 'high hazard' requiring the installation of a device appropriate for that hazard rating in accordance with AS/NZS 3500.1.
- If the use, and hence the hazard rating, of a premises changes, the customer shall install the appropriate backflow prevention device applicable to the hazard rating of the new use.
- All properties with a potable water connection that present a medium or high hazard rating must install and maintain an appropriate testable backflow prevention device at the property boundary for site containment protection purposes in accordance with AS/NZS 3500.1.
- 20mm & 25mm low hazard meter installations shall be protected through the provisions of the Council supplied water meter, which incorporates a backflow prevention device, at time of connection.
- The customer is responsible for the installation, maintenance and testing of the backflow prevention devices as required under AS/NZS 3500.1 for all devices other

than low hazard 20mm and 25mm meter installations. An approved test certification report for these devices must be completed and forwarded to Council annually. Annual testing of all registered backflow devices shall be undertaken by a licensed plumber with appropriate backflow accreditation in accordance with the *Plumbing Code of Australia*, AS/NZS 3500.1 and the *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2011*.

- If Council determines that the backflow prevention for a premise is unsatisfactory, a notice will be issued requiring the customer to repair, test, replace or install a suitable backflow prevention device(s). The customer must, at their expense, engage an accredited person to comply with the notice within the time specified in the notice.
- Where the property owner fails to install, repair, maintain, replace or test a backflow prevention device as required by a notice issued by Council, Council may disconnect (in the case of a non-residential property) or restrict (in the case of a residential property or mixed development) the customer from the drinking water supply system until such time as the customer has complied with the notice.
- Council shall advise the customer, in writing, the date for which the device is required to be tested (only applicable to medium and high hazard ratings).
- Upon advice from Council of the need to do so, the customer shall submit test certification of the satisfactory operation of the backflow device to Council within 30 days of the issue of the advice. Where the customer fails to provide the certification by the due date, Council may do one or more of the following:
 - Issue of formal notice under section 124 of the Local Government Act 1993
 - Test and certify the device and charge a fee to the customer in accordance with Council's Fees & Charges
 - Disconnect (non-residential) or restrict (residential) the water service if Council believes that the hazard presented by the activities on the property presents an unacceptable risk to the water supply and charge a fee for the disconnection/reconnection.
- Council will maintain a register of all current testable backflow prevention devices and annual test reports.
- When the current use of the site does not align with the level of backflow protection, Council may issue notice to the property owner detailing the areas which are unsatisfactory and identifying the rectification that is required.

Definitions

Backflow – Backflow is water flow in a direction against the normal or intended direction that results in the flow of water from an uncontrolled source into a controlled or managed drinking water supply. Backflow can be caused by a loss of pressure within the drinking water supply network or by flow from a pressurised system through an unprotected cross connection.

Backflow Prevention Device – A device used to prevent the reverse flow of water from a potentially contaminated source, into the potable water supply network.

Hazard Ratings – The three hazard ratings as prescribed within AS/NZS 3500.1, being:

High Hazard - Any condition, device or practice that, in connection with the water supply system, has the potential to cause death.

Medium Hazard - Any condition, device or practice that, in connection with the water supply system, has the potential to endanger health.

Low Hazard - Any condition, device or practice that, in connection with the water supply system, constitutes a nuisance but does not endanger health or cause injury.

References and related documents

- Water Directorate (2013) *Backflow Prevention and Cross Connection Control Guidelines*.
- New South Wales Government (2017) *Local Government Act 1993*.
- New South Wales Government (2017) *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2011*.
- Australian and New Zealand Standard (AS/NZS 3500.1) *Plumbing and Drainage Part 1: Water Services*
- Australian Drinking Water Guidelines 2011
- National Construction Code Series, 2012: Volume Three, Plumbing Code of Australia

Responsible officer

Manager Planning & Assets