



## Protect Your Water From Contamination By Providing Backflow Prevention



Each day, the City of Moline Water Division provides over 5 million gallons of purified water to our customers. Before being pumped to your home or business, this water is routinely tested to ensure it meets all United States Environmental Protection Agency drinking water standards and is of the highest possible quality.

In spite of our efforts, Moline's drinking water supply can be placed at risk by contaminants that "backflow" into the system from your home or business.

### What is backflow?

Backflow occurs when water flows backwards through your water pipes into City water mains. Backflow can be caused when a drop in pressure occurs in the incoming water main<sup>1</sup> or when pressure in the pipes inside your residential or commercial building becomes greater than the pressure in the water main. If your water pipes are connected to a source of pollution when backflow occurs, contaminants from that source can be siphoned into your drinking water, as well as that of the entire community.



RPZ backflow prevention device

<sup>1</sup>Two common reasons why mains might experience a drop in water pressure are main breaks and heavy consumption by firefighters battling a fire.

To protect Moline's drinking water supply from backflow related health hazards, the City of Moline's Code and the Illinois Plumbing Code require backflow prevention devices to be installed in all new homes and commercial buildings. These devices should also be installed on any existing property where the water system is either permanently or temporarily connected to a pollution source.

### What is considered a source of pollution?

Any direct connection of your home or business drinking water system to a source of pollution has the potential to create a health hazard if backflow occurs during the connection. Examples of potential pollution sources include:

- fire protection systems
- lawn irrigation systems
- restaurant food prep areas
- chemical processing and manufacturing operations
- boilers and hot water heat systems
- hospital wastes; and
- a garden hose that has been placed in an ornamental pond, or swimming pool, or connected to a plant fertilizer or bug spray canister



People who consume drinking water that has been accidentally mixed with chemicals or bacteria from any of these sources of contamination could become seriously ill. Backflow prevention devices can help prevent contaminated water from being accidentally mixed with our drinking water.



Certain backflow prevention devices - RPZs<sup>2</sup> and double-checks - must be inspected annually by a plumber certified by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency to ensure they are operating properly. Once a year, the City of Moline Water Division sends a letter to all customers identified as having these types of backflow prevention devices to remind them when their inspections are due. If you have an RPZ or double-check backflow prevention device at your property but have not received an inspection reminder letter in the past year, please contact us so we can add you to our mailing list. Common vacuum breakers found on most outside hose connections do not require annual inspections.

If your property's water system is ever connected to any source of pollution and you do not have a backflow prevention device, you need to have one installed immediately to protect the health and safety of your family, employees and neighbors. Backflow prevention devices can be installed by any licensed plumbing contractor.

If you aren't sure if you already have a backflow prevention device or what type of device you have or might need, or if you have any questions about backflow or how you can help protect our water supply, please feel free to contact us. We'll be glad to assist you any way we can.

### Want More Backflow Information?

Web: [www.abpa.org](http://www.abpa.org)  
[www.moline.il.us/government/municipal\\_codes.asp](http://www.moline.il.us/government/municipal_codes.asp)  
Chapter 34 Sec. 34-2200  
Cross-Connection Control  
Phone: (309) 524-2306  
Email: [tloete@moline.il.us](mailto:tloete@moline.il.us)

<sup>2</sup>Reduced Pressure Zone backflow prevention devices