

## What is Backflow?



### **Water Quality Responsibilities**

North East Water is responsible for ensuring a safe supply of water to your property.

### **What is Backflow?**

Backflow is unintended and undesirable reverse flow of water within the plumbing system of a property to the public mains supply. Backflow may be caused by back siphonage, back pressure or a combination of both. It can result in contaminants being drawn into the drinking water system through cross connection.

### **How Does It Affect My Business?**

Activities carried out on your property may involve using substances which if consumed may cause illness or death. These substances can contaminate the water supply when they come into direct contact with water supplied from the mains.

If such a situation developed your business may be exposed to:-

- Illness or possible death of occupants;
- Contamination of products and subsequent exposure to proceed liability claims;
- Litigation and possibly penalties, as the result of actions brought by the Department of Human Services under Occupational Health and Safety legislation; or
- Liability for damages caused to others on the same water supply as your property.

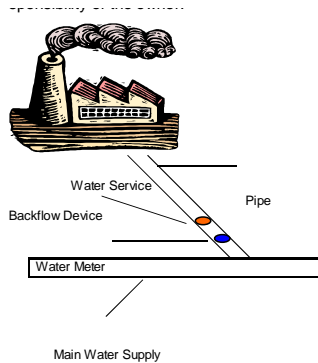
### **Installation, Ongoing Testing and Maintenance of the Backflow Prevention Device**

An approved backflow prevention device that conforms to the Australian Standards AS 2845.1 should be installed. A registered plumber is required to carry out the installation, however, high & medium testing, maintenance & certification can only be carried out by a plumber whose license is

endorsed by the Plumbing Industry Commission in Backflow. Testing of devices are carried out in 12 month intervals.

All containment testable devices are to be registered with North East Water.

All cost associated with the purchase, installation & maintenance of the device are the responsibility of the owner.



### **Backflow Risk Assessment and Risk Minimisation**

To minimise your risk, you should arrange for your business premises to be assessed to identify the most appropriate backflow prevention strategy. You may then be obliged to install a containment backflow prevention device at the boundary as a minimum requirement in accordance with North East Water's Backflow Prevention Policy.

Depending on the plumbing installation and hazard ratings of internal processes, you may need to install additional individual and/or zone protection backflow prevention devices, however fitting of additional devices should comply with the plumbing regulations. Backflow testable containment device at the boundary is mandatory where your business activities are assessed as a high or medium hazard.

Information on determining the correct device to install is in the Australian Standards AS 3500.1, Part 4.

### **Important Notes:**

- Testing and Commissioning Reports of containment devices are to be lodged with North East Water (NEW) (zone & individual devices are optional).
- Containment Testing, Commissioning, Installation and Agreement forms can be obtained from N E W.
- NEW has a Backflow Device Register.
- NEW Backflow Policy is designed to provide all its customers with safe drinking water.
- Annual reminders for registered containment devices will be sent to owners when the devices is due for testing.
- NEW will register Zoned and Individual Devices and send out appropriate notices as a service.

- Under certain circumstances NEW will accept zoned and individual devices as containment.
- Rural properties that use the Authority's reticulated water supply to service stock troughs through a float valve system are automatically rated medium risk. Property owners are required to fit an approved 'testable' Backflow Prevention Device at or near the property boundary.
- Properties with alternative water supply's where the pipe work is closer than 18m to the household plumbing will require assessment and the appropriate Backflow Prevention Device installed.
- List of Testable Backflow Prevention Devices:
  - Air Gap
  - Break Tank
  - Reduced Pressure Zone (RPZ)
  - Double Check Valve
  - Pressure Type Vacuum Breaker
- Plumbers are to access Backflow Prevention as per AS 3500.1, Part 4.