



Public Works Department
Water Division

Dear Water Customer,

What is the value of safe drinking water? In fact life is impossible without it. Water is essential to every form of life on earth, but is taken for granted by consumers. With increased population densities, urbanization, and pollution from industries and waste facilities, the public is becoming more aware of potential threats to their drinking water and the need for additional safeguards.

In the early 1900's drinking water treatment was revolutionized through the widespread introduction of disinfection, i.e. the addition of chlorine for purification. This resulted in dramatic reductions in the incidence of waterborne diseases such as typhoid, cholera, dysentery and hepatitis.

Locally we are very fortunate to have an abundant supply of clean, healthy drinking water just beneath our feet in the Spokane Valley/Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer. Here in the City of Post Falls we deliver this water to our customers directly from the aquifer. However this makes our distribution system extremely vulnerable to contamination through cross connections and backflow.

A cross connection is a point in a plumbing system where the potable water supply is connected to a non-potable source. Several common examples of cross connections are: swimming pools, irrigation sprinkler systems, solar heat systems, boilers, wash basins and service sinks. As you can see every water system has cross connections.

The City of Post Falls water distribution system is designed with the intention of the water flowing in one direction from the distribution system to the customer. Hydraulic conditions within the system may deviate from the "normal" conditions, causing the water to flow in the opposite direction in unprotected premises. For example, during firefighting, power outages, or when a main water line breaks, water is sucked to the point of high usage, possibly drawing non-potable substances with it, filling the water distribution system with potentially hazardous substances.

Because of these potential dangers to the water consumer it is necessary to control cross connections. Federal law requires water suppliers to protect their water system from contamination or pollution by cross connections. To do this, the City of Post Falls Water Division has engaged in a program of locating and recording cross connections within the public water distribution system to eliminate possible sources of contamination.

Initially we concentrated on our industrial and commercial water accounts. Then in 1998 we expanded our efforts to protect the water system by addressing residential landscape irrigation systems. The hazards normally found with landscape irrigation systems include fungicides, pesticides, soil conditioners and other similar noxious, toxic or objectionable substances from submerged sprinkler heads and inlets. The most harmful substances of concern are the fertilizers and weed killers used for lawn and garden care. At this time we are tracking over 4,500 backflow prevention assemblies within the city. These backflow preventers must be tested each year, to ensure that they are performing properly. When necessary they must be repaired or replaced in order to assure proper operation.

Drops in water pressure are not that common in our system, but they can and do occur. By working together, we can ensure clean, safe water free from objectionable impurities and health hazards.

We wish to take this opportunity to thank you for your time and cooperation, if you have any questions please phone the Water Division at (208) 777-9857, Monday through Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. or email us at waterdivision@postfallsidaho.org.

Sincerely,

City of Post Falls Water Division
Cross Connection Control Program