

POLICY REGISTER

BACKFLOW PREVENTION POLICY

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Issue	Prepared/Revised by and Date	Action/Amendment Description	Approved By and Date
1.0	Kerry Jones 10th June 2020	First Edition	Manex Committee – 16 June 2020 Council Minute No.111.6.20 (25th June 2020)
2.0	Sylvester Otieno, DMES, 26 February 2025	Policy Review/ Second Edition	Council Minute No.113.4.25 (24th April 2025)

1. OBJECTIVE

The objectives of the Backflow Prevention Policy are:

- To separate and protect the potable water supply from real or potential hazards by the installation of backflow devices.
- To minimise cross connection and thus reduce the possibility of backflow.
- To contain any real or potential hazard within the boundaries of the consumer's property.
- To ensure that non potable water from each end user does not infiltrate the Council water supply.

2. INTRODUCTION

Backflow is the reverse flow of water or other liquid from a potentially polluted source into the town's water supply. This is caused by several conditions:

- Back siphonage – is where the pressure in the reticulation system becomes less than atmospheric, this causes water from connected properties to flow backwards into the town's supply, e.g. water main break.
- Backpressure – is when the consumer's water pressure is greater than the pressure in the town's water supply.
- Cross-connection – is a direct or indirect physical connection of a potable water supply to a line that is non-potable, e.g. town water supply to a rainwater supply.

Warren Shire Council as the supplier of water to the public, undertakes to provide safe drinking water to the consumer's property. Council ensures this by protecting the systems from contamination or pollution. Council aims to make all new and existing water connections compliant with the Local Government Act and Australian Standards.

3. POLICY

Property owners are to meet the full cost of complying with this policy. All properties must comply with the requirements of the current Plumbing Code of Australia and AS/NZS 3500 or this policy which ever requires the highest protection level.

All properties within Warren Shire Council area that are connected to a water reticulation system require a backflow prevention device for containment at the property boundary as follows;

- Domestic Services: All domestic meters will have a dual check device as a minimum requirement. These are incorporated within the water meters provided by Council for 20mm and 25mm meters, larger meters will require separate devices. All dual check valves for domestic use are non-testable.
- Commercial/Industrial Services: Owners of properties with meters larger than 25mm will be required to install an appropriate backflow prevention device – usually a Dual Check Valve – subject to an assessment of the property's water use activities.
- Hose Taps: Hose taps within 18 metres of a zone protected area within the same premises shall have a backflow protection device of the same hazard rating as the zone protection adjacent to which it is installed (AS/NZS 3500). This will mainly apply to high hazard rating areas such as chemical mixing etc.
- All external domestic garden hose taps are to have a vacuum breaker device (AS/NZS 3500).

- The device required will be identified by the hazard rating detailed in AS/NZS 3500.

4. HAZARD RATINGS

- High Hazard: Any condition, device or practice within the water supply system and its operation, which has the potential to cause death.
- Medium Hazard: Any condition, device or practice within the water supply system and its operation, which could endanger health.
- Low Hazard: Any condition, device or practice within the water supply system and its operation, which would constitute a nuisance but not endanger health.

Customers are responsible for arranging the installation and maintenance of the backflow prevention devices in accordance with AS/NZS 3500. The maintenance and testing of backflow prevention devices shall be carried out by authorised persons, who are accredited to carry out testing procedures to AS/NZS 3500 at the property owner's expense.

5. ZONE OR INDIVIDUAL PROTECTION

Boundary containment will have equal to or higher rated protection than any individual or zone requirement. A containment backflow prevention device is required regardless of zone or individual protection. As Warren Shire Council cannot guarantee the integrity of zone or individual protection on a customer's site, we cannot guarantee the protection of the drinking water supply from backflow unless the site is contained at the boundary. The device to be installed on the property is determined by the hazard rating of the processes on site. If the hazard rating varies due to multiple business processes, the highest rating should be applied.

6. CROSS CONNECTION

Where, in the opinion of Council, a potential or physical cross-connection is found in the water service at any property, the property owner shall upon written advice by Council ensure that such a cross-connection is immediately disconnected or altered to comply with Council's requirements or otherwise be removed. Failure to comply within the period nominated by Council may result in the immediate restriction or disconnection of the property from Council's water supply.

7. FIRE SERVICES

Separate hydrant and sprinkler services require the installation of a double check valve assembly. On a separate hydrant and sprinkler fire service at a non-residential property, the device shall be installed close to where the water service crosses the property boundary, prior to any booster assembly. A hydraulic design is required for any fire service assembly,

- Unit demand of 4 and greater, and
- 32mm assemblies or greater.

All designs are to be submitted by a competent person (Plumbing Code of Australia) along with Warren Shire Council's design/compliance certificate. Backflow prevention devices reduce pressure and must be taken into account during the design process.

8. EXISTING PROPERTIES WITHOUT BACKFLOW PREVENTION

In cases where Council becomes aware that an existing connection does not have backflow prevention protection, Council will instruct the property owner to comply with this policy within seven (7) days of receipt of Council's notice. If the property

owner fails to comply with Council's notice, Council's delegated plumber will enter the property, under Sections 191, 191A or 192 of the Local Government Act, and install a backflow prevention device (supplementary containment, zone or individual devices). All costs incurred by Council taking this action will be met by the property owner.

9. RAINWATER TANKS WITH COUNCIL SUPPLY BACK UP CONNECTION

The Department of Health does not recommend consumption from rainwater tanks where a potable supply is provided. Council does not permit the interconnection of rainwater tanks with the potable or non-potable supplies.

Where interconnection does occur, rainwater tanks are to have:

- a dual check valve as zone and containment protection if the tank is above ground; or
- a testable double check valve as zone and containment protection if fully or partially buried (Plumbing Code of Australia).

10. STANDPIPES

Council has a number of fixed standpipes in each township available where bulk water is required directly from the main (i.e. flow rates, pressure requirements etc). Private non- fixed standpipes are not to be used to draw water under any circumstances. If a standpipe is required, a Council employee will supply, install and monitor the water supply from a Council standpipe at the applicant's cost (as per Council's published fees and charges).

11. TESTABLE DEVICES

In some circumstances, backflow devices require annual testing to ensure that they are operating appropriately (i.e. devices containing a high hazard property rating such as chemical mixing, stock drinking troughs, water tanker filling points etc). Council will maintain a data base of all registered backflow devices. All testable devices must be registered with Council tested on installation and then annually at the owner's expense.

12. REFERENCES

The backflow policy adheres to:

- NSW Local Government Act 1993 Section 124 Order 5.
- NSW Local Government (Water Services) Regulation 1999 Part 4 Clause 22.
- Plumbing Code of Australia (PCA),
- NSW Plumbing and Drainage Act, 2011
- NSW Plumbing and Drainage Regulation, 2017
- Australian Standard AS/NZS3500

13. MEASURE OF SUCCESS

Measure by the adherence to the Policy and Procedure outlined in the Policy.

14. POLICY REVIEW

This Policy should be reviewed every 4 years or within 12 months following an election of Council. The Policy may be reviewed and amended at any time at Council's discretion (or if legislative changes occur).