

# REQUIREMENTS FOR BACKFLOW PREVENTION



## DEFINITIONS

**Backflow:** An undesired or unintended reversal of flow of water and/or other liquids, gases, or other substances into a public water system's distribution system or approved water supply.

**Cross-Connection:** Any actual or potential connection or structural arrangement between a public water system, including a piping system connected to the public water system and located on the premises of a water user or available to the water user, and any source or distribution system containing liquid, gas, or other substances not from an approved water supply.

**Double Check Valve Assembly:** A backflow prevention device consisting of two independently operating check valves, with tightly closing shut-off valves located on each end.

**Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Prevention Device (RP):** A backflow prevention device consisting of two or more check valves and an automatically operating differential relief valve located in between, tightly closing shut-off valves on both ends, and test cocks for testing.

## BACKFLOW PREVENTION REGULATIONS

The State Water Resources Control Board adopted the Cross-Connection Control Policy Handbook (CCCPH), effective July 1, 2024. The CCCPH sets standards to ensure public drinking water distribution systems are not subject to backflow of liquids, gases, or other substances. They apply to all California public water systems, as defined in California's Health and Safety Code (section 116275 (h)). The CCCPH replaces and builds upon the existing Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations.

In accordance with the CCCPH, wherever backflow protection has been found necessary, the Otay Water District requires the customer to install an approved backflow prevention device — at the customer's expense — before starting or continuing service to protect the public water system. See the next section for single-family residential homes with fire protection systems.

### Questions? Contact:

Meter Services Supervisor Jon Chambers at (619) 670-2788  
[otaywater.gov/backflowcross-connection](https://otaywater.gov/backflowcross-connection)  
[otaywater.gov/code-of-ordinances](https://otaywater.gov/code-of-ordinances) (Sections 23 and 38)



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## SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES WITH FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS

The new regulations include retroactive requirements on single-family residential properties with fire protection systems. These properties are required to install an **above-grade double check valve backflow prevention assembly** (at the customer's expense) unless **all** the following criteria are met:

1. The home has only **one service connection** to the public water system.
2. **A single service line splits** for domestic flow and fire protection system flow, allowing the fire protection system to be isolated from the rest of the home.
3. **A single, industry-standard water meter** measures the combined domestic and fire protection system flows.
4. The fire protection system is constructed of **NSF/ANSI Standard 61 certified piping materials**.
5. The fire protection system's **piping is looped within the structure** and **connected to one regularly used fixture** (e.g., a toilet) to prevent stagnant water.

## INSTALLATION & TESTING

Where the above-listed criteria are not met, an approved backflow prevention assembly device must be installed on the customer's side of the service connection in accordance with the District's Standard Drawings and Specifications (visit [otaywater.gov/backflowcross-connection](https://otaywater.gov/backflowcross-connection)). It must also be readily accessible for maintenance and testing.

The District will send customers an annual reminder notice when testing is due, along with a list of certified testers and additional testing information. Testing is required annually from the installation date or when the device is repaired, replaced, or relocated. **It is the customer's responsibility to schedule and complete the testing.** All testing must be performed by a District-approved, certified backflow assembly tester and at the account holder's or owner's expense.

*Failure to install, maintain, and test a backflow device or to comply with state and federal regulations may result in code enforcement actions, such as fines and water service disconnection, until the issue is resolved.*



*The Otay Water District is a public agency providing water, recycled water, and sewer service to more than 238,000 customers within approximately 125 square miles of southeastern San Diego County, including the communities of eastern Chula Vista, Bonita, Jamul, Spring Valley, Rancho San Diego, unincorporated areas of El Cajon and La Mesa, and eastern Otay Mesa along the international border with Mexico. For more information on the Otay Water District, visit [otaywater.gov](https://otaywater.gov).*

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