SUNKO WATER SUPPLY CORPORATION

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Dear Valued Members,

The EPA (government level) is cracking down on TCEQ (state level) which trickles down to Water Purveyors (Sunko) on backflow preventions. What is a backflow? A backflow is defined by TCEQ as "water flowing in the opposite of its intended direction, either from a loss of pressure in the supply lines or an increase in pressure on the customer's side. When the water backflows it can carry contaminants with it into the water lines".

How can backflow be prevented?

Backflow into a potable-water system can be prevented by using a backflow-prevention assembly, or an air gap, which is a physical separation between the water supply and a potential source of pollution. Licensed professionals as well as your public water system are responsible for determining the type of backflow-prevention assembly required, based on the degree of hazard.

Testing backflow-prevention assemblies is essential because backflow-prevention assemblies are mechanical assemblies that can fail. The TCEQ requires testing of all backflow-prevention assemblies at installation by a TCEQ-licensed tester. Backflow-prevention assemblies installed to protect against any health hazard must be tested *annually*.

Who needs a backflow assembly?

1. If you have an irrigation system (aka sprinkler system) and a septic tank on your property. This situation would require a Reduced Pressure assembly (RP) to be installed.
2. If you have a cattle trough that fills from the bottom, RP installation would be required, or a new assembly that fills from the top (air gap).
3. If you have a personal water well that is tied into the same water supply line as Sunko, RP installation at the source of the tie in or in front of the meter would be required.

All RP assemblies are required to be tested upon installation and then annually thereafter. The test results report must be sent to the Sunko Office for recording keeping compliance. Note: 30 Tac 344.52 (a), states that if the irrigation system was installed before 2009, a double check valve assembly may have been installed. In that case the DCVA was grandfathered in, until it fails inspection, then a RP is required to be installed.

Lastly, if you have multiple houses serviced by one water meter, this is not in compliance by TCEQ rule 291.89(a)(4). Which states one meter is required for each residential, commercial, or industrial service connection. An apartment building or rv park may be considered by the utility to be a single commercial facility for the purpose of these sections. The executive director may grant an exception to the individual meter requirement if the plumbing of an existing multiple use or multiple occupant building would prohibit the installation of individual meters at a reasonable cost or would result in unreasonable disruption of the customary use of the property.

If either situation above applies to you personally, you have until *January 1, 2025* to comply or repercussion will occur. If you have any questions feel free to contact the office at (830)745-2399 or send an email to sunko@sunkowater.com.

Thank you for your time and assistance.

Joe K. Wiatrek

Joe K. Wiatrek
General Manager
Sunko Water Supply Corporation

TEXAS COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

A Consumer's Guide to Backflow Prevention in Texas

The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality requires all public water systems to maintain a cross-connection control program that protects the distribution system delivering drinking water to your home or business.

A cross-connection control program includes:

- An inspection of the customer's private plumbing to identify and prevent cross-connections and potential contamination, including contamination from high lead levels in the plumbing.
- Installation and testing of backflow-prevention assemblies, where required.
- Rules to prevent cross-connections and unacceptable plumbing practices—ordinances, regulations, service agreements, and a plumbing code.

Some public water systems may have more stringent requirements than the TCEQ. TCEQ regulations are the minimum requirement.

GI-411 (rev. 9/16)

What is a cross-connection?

A physical connection between potable water and an actual or potential contamination hazard that could make the water unsafe to drink. Wherever there is a cross-connection, there is a potential threat to public health from contaminants.

What is backflow?

Water flowing in the opposite of its intended direction, either from a loss of pressure in the supply lines or an increase in pressure on the customer's side. When the water backflows it can carry contaminants with it into the water lines.

Common cross-connections:

- *Garden hose:* Backflow can occur at your home if you leave a garden hose turned on and submerged in a swimming pool, insert it into your car's radiator to flush out the antifreeze, or attach it to an insecticide sprayer. That material could siphon back into your potable water.
- *Private well:* Backflow can also occur from an untreated water supply, such as a private well, if the well plumbing is connected to the potable-water-supply plumbing. The untreated water could be pumped into the potable-water supply serving your home and into the public water system.
- *Lawn sprinkler system:* TCEQ regulations require that all lawn sprinkler systems be connected through a backflow-prevention assembly—without which, the stagnant water, and anything in it, from the sprinkler system could be drawn into the potable-water supply for your home.

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Testing backflow-prevention assemblies

Because backflow-prevention assemblies are mechanical assemblies that can fail, the TCEQ requires testing of all backflow-prevention assemblies at installation by a TCEQ-licensed tester. Backflow-prevention assemblies installed to protect against any health hazard must be tested annually.

How can I find out more information about backflow?

For more information about backflow and cross-connection control, visit <www.tceq.texas.gov/goto/cc>.

www.tceq.texas.gov/publications/gi/gi-411.html

Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
TCEQ

How is our customer service?
tceq.texas.gov/customersurvey

TCEQ REGULATORY GUIDANCE
Water Supply Division
RG-219 • May 2008

One Meter per Residence Requirements

It is important for water customers to receive a continuous and adequate supply of water. It is equally important for retail public utilities to have adequate measures in place to help ensure that each water customer receives an adequate supply of water that is protected from contamination from external sources. To help achieve this, rules have been written for the protection of both the customer and the utilities that call for one meter per residence or per commercial connection. The following are excerpts from TCEQ rules. The numbers and letters in brackets indicate where these rules can be found in the Texas Administrative Code (30 TAC).

These rules apply to public water utilities:

One meter is required for each residential, commercial, or industrial service connection. An apartment building or mobile home park may be considered by the utility to be a single commercial facility for the purpose of these sections. The executive director may grant an exception to the individual meter requirement if the plumbing of an existing multiple use or multiple occupant building would prohibit the installation of individual meters at a reasonable cost or would result in unreasonable disruption of the customary use of the property. [291.89(a)(4)]

Use of meter. All charges for water service shall be based on meter measurements, except where otherwise authorized in the utility's approved tariff. [291.89(a)(1)]

These rules apply to retail public utilities and public water systems:

Each community public water system shall provide accurate metering devices at each service connection for the accumulation of water usage data. [290.44(d)(4)]

Connection - A single family residential unit or each commercial or industrial establishment to which drinking water is supplied from the system. [290.38]

Questions? Contact the Consumer Assistance group, Water Supply Division, at 512-239-4691 (*fax*, 512-239-6145) or by mail at this address:
Consumer Assistance MC 153
TCEQ
PO Box 13087
Austin TX 78711-3087