[Water System Name]

# Backflow/Cross-Connection Policy

**In all areas where the potential for contamination is high, [Water System Name] must install backflow preventers or air gaps**. The areas at highest risk for contamination due to backflow are unprotected cross-connections, which include any actual or potential connections between the public water supply and a source of contamination or pollution. Cross-connections can be identified by looking for physical interconnections between a customer plumbing and the water system. This can include areas such as:

* Lawn chemicals backflowing through a garden hose into indoor plumbing
* Backsiphonage of water from a toilet into a buildings water supply
* Backsiphonage of chemicals from industrial buildings into distribution system mains.
* Carbonated water from a restaurants soda dispenser entering a water system due to backpressure.

Backflow can be difficult to detect, and cross-connections can be numerous and varied in many systems, so protecting cross-connections becomes imperative to protecting the drinking water supply and in avoiding the costs of responding to an incident.

To ensure that all cross-connections are protected from backflow, the following best practices should be implemented:

* ALL areas with the high potential for contamination must have backflow preventers installed.
* Have a backflow inspector conduct inspections to identify any hazards that need to be controlled.
* Test all backflow prevention devices at the frequencies recommended or required by the state.
* Coordinate with the local building inspector’s office to ensure new construction projects implement backflow protection.
* Anyone using a hydrant to fill a tank must exercise safe fire hydrant connection procedures to prevent backflow.

In the event that a backflow does occur, the following measures should be taken:

1. Stop the pressure differential if possible and identify and remove the cross-connection.
2. Contact proper authorities to report the event, contact the public in the case that a threat to public health is suspected, and provide updated public notifications as the situation develops.
3. If a small contamination, continue to step 5. If the area of effect is unknown or extensive, develop a plan for systemic cleaning/flushing. The plan should indicate the amount of water and length of time that will be needed to clean the system.
4. During the event, continue to sample within and outside the suspected contaminated area.
5. Perform system flushing, and if necessary, cleaning of the customer’s system.
6. Test the drinking water in affected areas to ensure the contamination has been removed. Ensure that the risk of contamination has been eliminated using backflow prevention measures that meet local and state requirements.

*“I have reviewed the policy above and sign below to signify that I acknowledge all that is contained. I, to the best of my ability, will carry out all policy components and requirements.”*

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|  |  | Primary System Operator |
| Print Name |  | Position |
|  |  |  |
| Signature Name |  | Date |

Acknowledgment by additional employees:

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| **Print Name** | **Signature Name** | **Position Title** | **Date** |
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