



Hooksett Village Water Precinct

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February 21, 2019

RE: Irrigation Line with Non-Compliant Backflow Device: **ACTION REQUIRED**

Dear Valued Customer:

In 2017, we notified you that we were undertaking a comprehensive review of our cross-connection (backflow prevention) program, including a review of irrigation systems for proper protection. That review has now been completed, and as a result we have identified dozens of customers with irrigation systems with non-compliant backflow protection devices. Your residence has one of those systems.

According to our *Cross-Connection Control Program Bylaw* and Section Env-Dw 505.08 of the *NH Backflow Prevention Rule*, irrigation systems that have been identified as presenting a High Degree of Hazard must be protected by either a Reduced Pressure Zone (RPZ) backflow device or an Air Gap. Devices such as Pressure Vacuum Breakers (PVBs) or Double Check Valves (DCVs) are not allowed.

If you are receiving this notice, you are **required** to either (a) replace your current PVB/DCV with an approved device or (b) permanently remove your PVB/DCV and disconnect the irrigation system. We strongly recommend using a licensed plumber certified in backflow protection to make the changes, no later than May 15, 2019. Any non-compliant devices that remain active and are tested after that date will be considered to have failed their tests and subject to subsequent restrictions.

We know this is inconvenient, and hope you understand the need for complying with this requirement in the coming months. We've been trying to make the transition as convenient as possible by allowing those affected by this law to comply over a longer period of time so that they wouldn't feel an immediate crimp in their finances. However, that period is now ending in order to better protect the drinking water supply.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and understanding. If you should have any questions about the process of replacing your protection device, please contact us. *When you have installed the RPZ, please notify us immediately so that we can inspect and approve the device.*

Respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike Heidorn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Heidorn
Superintendent

Enclosure: *Frequently Asked Questions*

****FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS****
IN-GROUND IRRIGATION SYSTEM OWNERS: RPZ INSTALLATIONS



PVB



DCV



RPZ ✓

Why am I required to install a Reduced Pressure Zone (RPZ) device on my irrigation system? Irrigation systems are considered to be High Hazard cross-connections by the Precinct. High Hazard cross-connections are required to be protected by RPZs or Air Gaps by local and state law. Air gaps are not commonly used.

What is a cross-connection? A cross-connection is any actual or potential connection between the public water system and any source of contamination or an unapproved water source (e.g. a private well).

Why be concerned? Without the proper backflow prevention device (in this case, an RPZ), water from an irrigation system could flow backwards into the home plumbing and then into the public water distribution mains. As the water flows, it can draw insects, pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, fertilizers, worms, etc. through the sprinkler heads. Once in the public mains, these contaminants could go anywhere in the Village.

Why don't I have an RPZ already? Older systems that have been in our program for years were installed prior to the current understanding that in-ground irrigation systems represent potential high-degree public health hazards. Some newer systems, and older systems that became part of our program in 2017-18, were installed by owners or contractors that may not have been initially aware of the legal requirements.

What type of backflow prevention device do I have? Chances are your non-compliant device is a Pressure Vacuum Breaker (PVB) or Double Check Valve (DCV). These devices do not protect you from High Hazards.

Where can I purchase an RPZ? You can purchase RPZs online and through local plumbing suppliers and contractors. Typical prices start at around \$200. If purchasing yourself, be sure you're buying the right device.

Who should I call to install the RPZ? A licensed local plumber certified in backflow prevention is your best bet. They have the knowledge and expertise to install your device correctly, identify any other plumbing problems, and offer constructive suggestions. Some irrigation companies may also have the licensing needed.

Can I install the RPZ myself? If you are willing to process the plumbing permit required by the Town and pass the plumbing inspection, you may do it yourself. Any questions, call the Hooksett Code Officer.

How should the RPZ be installed? The RPZ should be installed in strict accordance with local plumbing codes. We recommend that it be installed outside (where it can drain without damaging your home) in an easily accessible location with quick disconnect fittings for seasonal device removal and maintenance.

** Irrigation systems without approved and permitted devices represent potential high-degree hazards to both your home and the public water system. Please help us keep the water safe.**