

FAQs:

Why does Oconee County have this program?

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD), in accordance with the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act, requires Oconee County to have a backflow prevention program.

What are the legal requirements?

Backflow prevention devices and other cross connection measures must comply with the Georgia State Plumbing Code Amendments to the International Plumbing Code. Also, backflow preventers must be periodically tested by certified testing professionals.

This program is designed to protect the public water supply from pollutants and contaminants that could, under certain circumstances, be drawn into the County's public water system from private properties. These pollutants and contaminants can cause illness when ingested.



Water Resources

1291 Greensboro Highway
P.O. Box 88
Watkinsville, GA 30677

Office Hours: Monday – Friday
8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

For information call: (706) 769-3960

Wesley Watson, Backflow Prevention
Coordinator

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More details may be found at:
<https://www.oconeecounty.com/395/Water-Resources-formerly-Utility-Departm>

Planning & Code Enforcement

Room A108
1291 Greensboro Highway
Watkinsville, GA 30677

Office Hours: Monday – Friday
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

For information call: (706) 769-3910



Water Resources

Planning & Code Enforcement



Backflow Prevention & Cross Connection Control



What You Need to Know if You Are a

- Homeowner
- Business Owner
- Plumber or Contractor

BACKFLOW PREVENTION

What is backflow? Backflow is the reversal of flow in a water system from normal or intended direction of flow.

Why is backflow prevention necessary? To prevent any potential contaminants or pollutants from entering the water distribution system from private plumbing systems, either from back pressure or back-siphonage.

Who is affected? All accounts with connections to the County's public water system.

Where does a backflow preventer need to be installed? Backflow preventers must be installed on the customer's side of all water meters at the connection or before the first point of use.

How do I know if I have a backflow preventer now or who can I contact to one installed? Any plumbing contractor who possesses a current Master Plumbing License from the State of Georgia can assess your plumbing to determine if you already have a backflow preventer installed. If not, they can assist you with any of your backflow prevention installation needs.

How do I know what type of backflow preventer is required for my service?

Backflow prevention is broken down into two categories: high hazard and low hazard. The type of assembly required for each category of customer hazard can be found at <https://www.oconeecounty.com/395/Water-Resources-formerly-Utility-Departm.>

CROSS CONNECTION

What is a cross connection? A cross connection is a point in a plumbing system where the potable water supply is connected to a non-potable source.

Where are cross connections found? Cross connections are found in plumbing systems. It is important that each cross connection be identified and evaluated with regard to proper disconnection requirements and/or the type of backflow protection required to protect the drinking water supply. Some plumbing fixtures have built-in backflow protection in the form of a physical air gap. Common cross connections found in plumbing and water systems are listed at <https://www.oconeecounty.com/395/Water-Resources-formerly-Utility-Departm.>

What do I do after my backflow preventer is installed? Maintain and annually test your backflow preventer. A list of professionals, certified under the Georgia Statewide

Backflow Prevention Assembly Certification Program (GBPAT), is maintained by the Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP), the State's authorized testing party, at www.gawp.org/page/Backflow.

IRRIGATION & FIRE PROTECTION SYSTEMS

Why are irrigations and fire protection systems of concern? Irrigation and fire sprinkler systems have the potential for contaminants or pollutants to be introduced into the potable water supply through submerged sprinkler heads, injectors, Fire Department connections, and standpipes.

Single Family Irrigation Systems: An irrigation meter separate from the potable water account is recommended for protecting a home's drinking water.

Commercial & Multi-Family Irrigation & Fire Protection Systems: All commercial sites and multi-family residences are required by Georgia and Oconee County regulations, to have a reduced pressure zone backflow prevention assembly (RPZ) on each potable service connection. Where sprinkler fire protection is installed, fire service lines must have a double detector check (DDC) backflow prevention assembly at each connection to the County's public water system.