

The responsibility for protecting the safety of our public water supply belongs to both the water utility and the consumer.

Thank you for your cooperation and interest in the supply of clean, safe drinking water.



CITY OF PUNTA GORDA



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City of Punta Gorda Utility Department
326 West Marion Avenue
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City of

Punta Gorda

Water Department

Restaurants

Safe Water and Backflow Prevention

The City of Punta Gorda is dedicated to providing safe drinking water. Maintaining a strong backflow prevention program is vital to our success.

The city and its restaurant owners share the responsibility to protect Punta Gorda's water system. The city will provide a safe water supply to the restaurant owners, who, in turn, need to maintain plumbing systems in compliance with state and local ordinances, requirements, codes and policies.

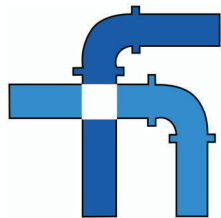


What is a Cross-Connection?

A cross-connection occurs whenever a potable drinking water line is directly or indirectly linked with a non-potable piece of equipment or piping. Examples of non-potable equipment typically found in a restaurant include dishwashers, hood washers, air conditioning systems, fire protection systems, power washing systems, boilers, and post-mix beverage machines.

How does Cross-Connection Contamination Happen?

Cross-connection contamination can occur as a result of backpressure or backsiphonage: both of which reverse the normal system flow. Backpressure and backsiphonage can result in non-potable water (e.g., well, canal, and reuse) or chemicals used in equipment or plumbing systems ending up in the drinking water line. Backpressure occurs when the pressure in the equipment or system, such as a Hot water system, or beverage dispenser is greater than the pressure in the drinking water line. Backsiphonage occurs when the pressure in the drinking water line drops due to common occurrences such as water main breaks, nearby fires and unusually heavy water demand. Both backpressure and back-siphonage can cause contaminants to enter the water distribution system.



cross-connection

Why should I be concerned?

An unprotected or inadequately protected cross-connection on your premises could contaminate the drinking water not only in your restaurant but also in the water lines that supply neighboring homes and businesses. Severe illnesses and injuries—even death—have resulted from cross-connection contamination events that could have been prevented. Such events have been known to cause outbreaks of hepatitis A, gastroenteritis, Legionnaire's disease, chemical poisoning and body lesions (from exposure through showering). They also can rupture plumbing fixtures and cause explosions.

What is my liability?

You are responsible for all unprotected or inadequately protected cross-connections on your premises and liable for any damages or illnesses they may cause. In cases where business owners have been proven to be at fault for cross-connection contamination events, judges and juries have awarded plaintiffs substantial monetary damages. Additionally local and state fines are possible if a restaurant owner fails to adequately protect a cross-connection and places the public's health at risk or damages the environment.

What is the cost of providing adequate cross-connection protection in a restaurant?

Since a backflow prevention device may be the only barrier between your customers and contaminated water, your investment in installing and keeping the equipment maintained is minimal compared to the potential liability of a backflow incident.

How is the City of Punta Gorda protecting the potable water supply?

The Federal Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974 established national standards for drinking water. State and local governments or water purveyors are charged with enforcing these standards, protecting the public water supply and delivering safe drinking water.

Unprotected cross-connections with the potable water system are prohibited. Florida public water suppliers are required to implement cross-connection control programs as outlined by the administrative code chapter [62 555 360](#). Health officials, plumbing inspectors, municipalities and property owners must work together to insure safe potable water.

Installing a Backflow Prevention assembly on the water line protects the integrity of the potable water. The City of Punta Gorda, in our effort to protect the potable water distribution system, requires the installation of a Backflow Prevention assembly on every commercial water line. A Certified Backflow Prevention Technician must test the RPZ assembly, and it must be tested annually. A list of certified plumbers and backflow assembly testers that are certified is available from the City of Punta Gorda.

