



Backflow Prevention Assembly Charge FAQs

What is a backflow prevention assembly?

It is a mechanical assembly attached to the drinking water meter to prevent any potentially contaminated water from entering the main water line or your neighbor's line.

How do I know if I have a backflow prevention assembly?

If you currently have reclaimed water service and/or reclaimed water service availability; if you participated in the Pinellas County Alternate Water Sources Rebate Program; or if you are a commercial water customer, you could have a backflow prevention assembly on your property. If you do not know if you have a backflow prevention assembly, please contact Pinellas County Utilities Customer Service at (727) 464-4000.

How can my water become contaminated?

This can occur if your drinking water pipes, either accidentally or on purpose, become cross connected with anything that is not approved for drinking water. This could include reclaimed water, pond water, irrigation well water, oil or other substances.

Does a cross connection ever happen?

Yes, there are many documented cases.

Why are backflow prevention assemblies installed, and why do I need one?

They are installed to protect your drinking water, and because local and state regulations require them.

Are backflow prevention assemblies new?

No, they have been in existence since around 1945 and Pinellas County has been using them since 1977.

On what type of service lines are backflow prevention assemblies installed?

These assemblies are installed on drinking water lines which serve properties that have a second source of water as well as on lines that serve commercial properties. Second sources of water may include reclaimed water, industrial treatment water, ponds or lakes used for irrigation, and non-drinking water wells.

Is there only one backflow prevention assembly at each property?

Most properties have only one device. However, some properties, like a shopping center or condominium, can have multiple assemblies. Some single family properties with a fireline may have an additional assembly. See [Backflow Prevention Assemblies: Typical Locations](#)

Will I be charged for each backflow prevention assembly at my property?

Yes, because each assembly requires its own testing and repair. Your property can have various combinations of assembly types. There are four [types of backflow prevention assemblies](#).

Why has Pinellas County decided to charge for this testing and repair?

Only 36% of our customers currently have backflow prevention assembly devices. Historically the funds budgeted to provide the required maintenance was allocated from revenue generated by 100% of our Utilities customers. The expense will now be charged only to those customers who have these assemblies.