



## **Drinking Water Fact Sheet Cross-Connection & Backflow Prevention**

- All State of Alabama public water systems must, according to the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) Water Supply Program Regulations (Chapter 335-7-9-01), establish and maintain an approved cross-connection and backflow prevention program.
- A cross-connection is any physical connection or other arrangement through which unauthorized and potentially harmful liquids, gases, or other substances may be introduced into the drinking water.
- Backflow is a reversal of the normal direction of flow within a piping system.
- The cross-connection and backflow prevention program is designed to protect the water system's distribution lines from contamination or pollution from foreign substances which may compromise human health.
- ADEM's Water Supply Program Regulations stipulate that distribution and service lines must operate in their original intent to deliver only properly treated drinking water. In addition, this treated water must meet or exceed both United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) and ADEM's water quality standards.
- A public water system may require commercial, business, or residential customers, to eliminate (at their own expense) actual or potential health hazards, or other degradation to the public water system that may be caused by unprotected cross-connections and backflow prevention problems as part of their program.
- Water system customers may be required to install (also at their own expense) a backflow preventer assembly or device.
- Approved backflow assemblies must be tested at the time of installation and on an annual basis by a state certified tester. Test results are required to be submitted annually. Approved backflow devices may be required to be replaced or reconditioned as needed to maintain good working condition of the backflow device.
- For information on cross-connection and backflow prevention visit the Alabama Department of Environmental Management website:  
<http://www.adem.state.al.us/Regulations/regulations.htm>