

Backflow prevention & containment policy

Purpose

Greater Western Water (GWW) provides drinking water, recycled water and alternative water services to its customers and employees. Under Section 163(a) of Water Act 1989 and provisions of the operating license, GWW has an obligation to protect the community's water supply and to deliver high quality drinking water to all properties connected to its drinking water network.

Objectives

GWW will work with and assist customers and employees in fulfilling their obligation to minimise the risk of potential contaminants entering the community's water supplies. This may include potential threats from on-site processes being conducted within residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural or mixed development sites.

The Policy aims to ensure that:

- All property owners of new developments with reticulated water, recycled water and alternative water supply connections install and maintain an appropriate backflow prevention device at the boundary/main water meter for containment purposes in line with AS/NZS 3500:1.
- All property owners of existing developments when notified by GWW comply with the requirements of AS/NZS 3500:1, the Plumbing Code of Australia 2011 and the Water (Estimation, Supply and Sewerage) Regulations 2014.
- All property owners comply with their obligation to backflow prevention requirements as set out in the *Water (Estimation, Supply and Sewerage) Regulations 2014* (as amended).

Framework

In line with Section 145 (*Control over connections*) of the *Water Act 1989*, and GWW's reliance on backflow prevention devices to protect the supply of potable water within our HACCP plan and within our Condition of Consent to permit connection to the reticulated water supply, GWW will:

- Specify when testable backflow prevention containment devices are required to be installed and tested at properties with a medium or high hazard rating in order to protect the reticulated water supply system from contamination flowing

back through the property water service, metered standpipes, separate fire service or hydrants

- Outline the requirements to install and test backflow prevention containment devices on properties rated as medium and high hazards
- Outline the requirements to install non-testable backflow prevention devices on properties rated as a low hazard
- Identify backflow prevention containment requirements for customers with multiple reticulated water supplies
- Ensure that standpipes (portable and fixed for transporting water and temporary supply purposes) connected to GWW's reticulated water supply system shall be installed with a high hazard backflow prevention device
- Identify backflow prevention containment requirements on fire services.

The principles that underpin GWW's Backflow Prevention Containment Policy are:

- The property owner is responsible for the purchase and installation costs of a backflow prevention containment device appropriate to the hazard rating of the development type as specified in AS/NZS 3500.1 Water Supply Section 4 and the Plumbing Code of Australia 2011 (and as amended).
- The property owner is responsible for the maintenance and testing of the device as detailed in AS/NZS 3500.1 and the Plumbing Code of Australia 2011 (as amended), AS/NZS 2845 Part 3 (as amended) and the Water (Estimation, Supply and Sewerage) Regulations 2014 Section 11 and 12 (as amended) by a suitably qualified person.
- GWW will maintain a register of all installed testable backflow prevention containment devices and annual test reports. It will conduct audits of installations from time-to-time to ensure on-going compliance with AS/NZS 3500.1 and the Plumbing Code of Australia 2011 (as amended).
- If GWW issues a notice that a backflow prevention containment device does not comply with AS/NZS 3500.1 and the Plumbing Code of Australia 2011 (as amended) and this policy, the property owner must engage a suitably qualified person to repair, maintain, test, replace or install the backflow prevention containment device as specified in the notice within the timeframe given.
- If the property owner fails to comply with the notice issued by GWW to repair, maintain, test, replace or install the backflow prevention containment device, then GWW in accordance with *Water Act 1989* may remove or disconnect the Reticulated Water Supply System to the property or carry out the required works and recover from the property owner all reasonable and associated costs.
- If the process at the property has changed affecting the hazard rating, the property owner must have a suitably qualified person assess the site and provide GWW with a written report, detailing the findings of their assessment,

certifying the change in hazard rating. GWW may conduct a site audit to verify the revised hazard rating.

Related Policies and Procedures

GWW Backflow Prevention Containment Guidelines (Document IRD-166)

Accountability for Implementation

Managing Director

General Managers

Manager Communications & Corporate Relations

Managers

Team Leaders

Implementation will be overseen by Risk and Compliance General Manager, Customer Experience and the General Manager People and Safety.

Roles and responsibilities

The Executive Leadership Team is responsible for incorporating our responsibilities under this policy into our business planning activities.

The General Manager, Customers Experience is responsible for directing, reviewing, and reporting upon the implementation of the Collections Policy for our customers.

All employees are responsible for developing an understanding of how their work functions are affected by this Policy.

References

Water Act 1989

Water (Estimation, Supply and Sewerage) Regulations 2014

Safe Drinking Water Act 2003

AS/NZS 2845 Water Supply – Backflow Prevention Devices

AS/NZS 3500 Part 1 Water Services and Part 5 Cold Water Plumbing Part 1 (Section 4)

Plumbing Code of Australia 2018

Werribee Recycled Water Scheme HACCP Plan IRD-129 (contains reference to backflow devices identified as quality control points).

Customer Service Charter

POL-20

Risk Management Policy

**Employee policy (NB: there are 2 separate enterprise agreements for employees WW & CWW)

Esc Clause 14 – customer service code – urban business

***Subject to change as per: National Cabinet

Review process

The policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently as required

Approved by ELT on 10/06/2021

Next due for review by the ELT in 06/2022