



City Council Report

Date: December 2, 2024
To: City Council
Through: Marc Heirshberg, Deputy City Manager
From: Christopher Hassert, Water Resources Director
Jennifer Calles, Regulatory Compliance Manager
Subject: Backflow Prevention and Cross-Connection Control Ordinance
Citywide

Purpose and Recommendation

The purpose of this report is to recommend the City Council approve repealing and replacing the Backflow Prevention and Cross-Connection Control ordinance, Mesa City Code Title 8, Chapter 1.

Background and Discussion

The City of Mesa requires backflow devices on commercial, industrial, and residential landscape connections to the City's distribution system to protect the public water supply from contamination. Internal hazards in commercial and industrial sites require backflow devices to protect the internal drinking water lines from contamination. The existing ordinance has not had a major update since it was originally created in 1985.

The Water Resources Department and the City Attorney's office have done extensive work to update the code to bring it in line with current state statutory requirements, provide transparency in the determination of compliance and reorganize the current code to make it more user friendly for the public. In addition, changes are needed to this code to clearly outline expectations for testing and meeting compliance dates for the backflow tester companies. The proposed changes include:

- Reformatting the code to be more consistent with other City codes, improving the readability and organization of the language.
- Creating a definition section and ensuring consistency with other Mesa ordinances. Section 8-1-1.
- Creating a section that defines when backflow protection is required for service protection and internal site hazards to the internal drinking water lines. Section 8-1-3.

- Creating a section defining site hazards that would require a backflow assembly and appropriate level of protection required for each hazard. Section 8-1-4.
- Creating a section listing requirements for site plan submittals specific to backflow assemblies. Section 8-1-6.
- Creating a section defining when a facility inspection shall occur including specific time periods when changes need to be made depending on the level of hazard on site. Section 8-1-7.
- Updating a list of water service protection measures required for specific sites to include most common sites in the City. Section 8-1-8.
- Adding a list of internal equipment or appliances requiring backflow protection. Each piece of equipment lists all acceptable backflow assemblies. Section 8-1-9.
- Creating a section that defines the process and expectations for a backflow tester to become a Recognized Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester. This section includes disciplinary actions the Department may take if a Customer received an Out of Compliance Fee due to the Tester not following Department expectations. Section 8-1-12.

Alternatives

Status quo; no change. This is not recommended due to challenges with enforcement of the program and the risk of contaminating the water distribution system.

Fiscal Impact

The Water Resources Department does not anticipate the City will incur additional fiscal impacts from the proposed City Code revisions.

Coordinated With

The development of the City Code revisions was coordinated with the City Attorney's Office.