



PO Box 470 • 255 Sarazin Street
Shakopee, Minnesota 55379
Main 952.445-1988 • Fax 952.445-7767
www.shakopeeutilities.com

March 29, 2023

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING BACKFLOW PREVENTION AND IRRIGATION SYSTEMS

Dear Resident:

SPU has recently introduced a **Backflow Prevention and Cross Contamination Policy**, in accordance with the MN State Plumbing code. This policy was adopted by the SPU Commission in March 2022 as part of a three-year plan to help safeguard our drinking water from contaminants that may enter the drinking water system from irrigation systems. As the water purveyor for Shakopee, it is our responsibility to keep potable (drinking) water safe for all users and preventing backflow is just one measure in this process.

- 2022** - Announce policy and provide information on backflow prevention to customers.
- 2023** - Continue to educate customers on the dangers of cross contamination and communicate the inspection requirements for an irrigation system, per SPU policy and state code.
- 2024** - Reiterate required backflow prevention actions with seasonal reminders from **The Compliance Engine** and enforce annual testing of irrigation systems. (The Compliance Engine is a third party, web-based service SPU utilizes for inspection reporting and tracking compliance for backflow assemblies on irrigation systems.)

This letter is intended to provide more information regarding SPU's new policy and to prompt property owners with an irrigation system to complete the required testing of the backflow assembly on their irrigation system. Per MN State Plumbing code, backflow assembly testing is required upon installation and then annually thereafter. This code was enacted for systems installed in 2016 and forward; however, to treat all SPU customers consistently and further protect the drinking water, SPU policy includes all irrigation systems regardless of installation date.

Property owners are responsible for all testing and maintenance of the backflow assembly, and any associated costs, on active systems. If you are no longer using your irrigation system it can be locked out and no further testing is required until system is returned to service. You can request this lockout through SPU's Water Department. **Information regarding testing requirements, as well as a list of certified testers, is available on our website – ShakopeeUtilities.com. Additional information can also be found on the MN Dept of Health website.** We highly recommend visiting our site to learn more about code, backflow prevention and cross contamination. Many questions can be answered on this page. Our Water Department staff is also available to address your questions. They can be reached at 952-233-1503, Monday-Friday, 7:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

This brings me to Renewal/Anniversary dates for annual testing and compliance. The desired action is for annual testing to be done upon system startup as this provides the best line of defense throughout the irrigating season. A date of April 1, 2023 was previously communicated to many customers; however, we are extending this date to July 15, 2023 for all customers due to the late spring this year. Note: If you had your system tested later than July 15 in 2022 (i.e., at the end of the season), you do not need to have it tested again for twelve months from that date unless you want to transition to the 'season startup' schedule. Going forward all individual Anniversary/Renewal dates will be 12 months from the last system test date entered in The Compliance Engine by your tester.

Thank you for working together to keep Shakopee's drinking water safe.

Greg Drent, General Manager

