

# HAYDEN LAKE IRRIGATION DISTRICT

## Backflow

The Hayden Lake Irrigation District manages and maintains our backflow prevention program in accordance with Idaho Department of Environmental Quality regulations. The District has a responsibility to prevent potential contamination from entering the water system. One way we achieve this is addressed through the Districts backflow prevention program.

The Districts water system is designed so water flows in one direction from the well sites to the customer. Backflow happens in two ways; they are either siphoned into the water system or pressured into the water system. When a backflow occurs, contamination can enter the water system; working backflow prevention assemblies help prevent contamination from entering the water system.

### What is the customers' responsibility?

**All backflow assemblies are required to be tested annually by June 30<sup>th</sup> regardless of whether the assembly is for a sprinkler system, commercial property, or a fire protection system.** Annually testing and maintaining all backflow assemblies is required; lawn sprinkler systems must be tested when the system is recharged (turned on) and/or prior to June 30<sup>th</sup>. The system doesn't have to be operating by June 30<sup>th</sup> but a satisfactory backflow test must be submitted.

### What can the customer do to prevent backflow situations?

- Do not submerge hoses or place them where they could become submerged.
- Use hose bib vacuum breakers on fixtures (hose connections, laundry room and on outside faucets/spigots)
- Install an approved backflow prevention assembly on lawn irrigation, fire sprinkler system and all commercial buildings need a RP device installed.

The most common backflow event is caused by the ordinary garden hose. It can be easily connected to the potable water supply and used for a variety of potentially dangerous applications.

### What steps are the District taking to verify the customer has met their responsibility?

- The District invested in software to track assemblies and testing compliance.
- We will send a letter to all our customers in March as a reminder to have the backflow assembly tested.
- We will send another letter 30 days before the June 30<sup>th</sup> due date as an additional reminder.
- If test results are not received by June 30<sup>th</sup>, we will send a final letter to have the backflow assembly tested within 15 days.
- The **final step** is a door tag notice of disconnection. If this is necessary, there is a **\$20.00 door tag fee** applied to your account. If assemblies are not tested the District may terminate water service until the assembly is tested and found to be in working order. If water service is terminated there is a **\$25.00 disconnection fee** applied to your account.

### Who do I hire for testing my assembly?

Testing of all backflow assemblies by a certified tester is required by the State of Idaho and the District. The District maintains a list of certified testers who have complied with the State of Idaho and District requirements. This list is on our website under Backflow Program - Certified Testers, or you may pick up a copy at our office. Using a certified tester not on our list may result in an invalid test.

When looking to hire a certified tester, a few good questions to ask are:

1. Are you on the Hayden Lake Irrigation District certified testers list?
2. Do you submit test reports promptly to the water provider?
3. Do you provide me a copy of the test report and tag the assembly?
4. If the assembly fails its initial test, do you clean the assembly and re-test immediately?
5. If cleaning does not resolve the failure, do you have the tools and parts on hand to perform repairs or will you walk away?

We appreciate our customers having the assemblies tested in a timely manner; we work hard every day to provide you with good safe drinking water. We appreciate your cooperation in preventing contamination of your water.

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## Conservation

Conservation of the water resource makes sense. The District uses the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer as its sole water source. The aquifer we rely on is productive and stable; however, all resources have their limit. For that reason, we all need to use water wisely. The District's production of water for our customers increases dramatically during the summer. This increase is due to watering lawns, gardens, landscape and irrigation of crops. The District has implemented an odd/even water schedule for customers to follow regarding lawn and landscape irrigation.

Please set your sprinklers timers to run, at the most, every other day and begin the setting on an odd date if your street address ends in an odd number; or begin on an even date if your street address ends with an even number. New lawns; sod, seed or hydroseed may be watered daily until established.

As the population increases, not only in our district but throughout the region, wise use will become more and more important. To this end we are providing a few suggestions to help conserve water.

- **When to water** – Watering in the morning or evening is most efficient. Watering in the heat of the day can cause evaporation rates of 50% or greater, that means half of the water you pay for is going into the sky. Watering during windy periods has the same effect.
- **How much to water** - Many people over water lawns and landscape. Too much water will promote shallow root growth and may increase plant diseases. This will result in a weak plant, which can allow increased weeds and often results in application of more fertilizer and herbicides which end up in our aquifer.
- **How to water** - Water the lawn and landscape. Don't water the drive, street and house, they won't grow. Learn how to read and set your automatic sprinkler timer. By reducing the time, or the frequency of watering you may be able to reduce the amount of water without affecting the quality of the landscape. Make small changes over time.
- **Type of landscape** - Consider low water use landscapes along with smaller lawn areas and trees. Trees provide shade which help cool your home, reducing power consumption, shade the lawn and landscape reducing the amount of water necessary. Ground cover can offer a nice alternative to lawn grasses in landscapes. Mechanical weed blocks are also a good method where barks, gravels, or other waterless decorative ground cover will be used.
- **Maintaining your landscape** – Allowing lawn grasses to grow longer during the summer reduce the amount of water needed due to additional shading of the soils. We recognize some homeowner associations have determined an acceptable lawn length within a subdivision, and many people have their own ideas on proper lawn length. Personal preferences aside, longer lawns do provide more shade and reduce water needed during the heat of the summer.

The District recognizes the importance of conservation of the aquifer and encourages wise and necessary use by its members. Please help us in this by not dumping contaminants on the ground and using the water wisely.

If you have any questions please call us at 208-772-2612 or e-mail [district@haydenirrigation.com](mailto:district@haydenirrigation.com).