

## COMMON DEFINITIONS

### **How Does Backflow or Cross-Connection Contamination Occur?**

Water normally flows in one direction, from the public water system through the customer's cold or hot water plumbing system to a faucet or other plumbing fixture. Under certain conditions, water can flow in the reverse direction. This is known as backflow, and it occurs when back siphonage or backpressure is created in a waterline.

**ASSE** – American Society of Sanitary Engineering. ASSE International is a membership organization and leading product and personnel certification agency for companies and individuals representing all disciplines of the plumbing and mechanical industries. Wisconsin Plumbing Code recognizes ASSE standards for plumbing products and backflow preventers associated with potable water plumbing systems.

**AIR GAP** - The unobstructed vertical distance through the free atmosphere between the lowest opening from any pipe or faucet supplying water to a tank, plumbing fixture or other device and the flood level rim of the receptacle.

**BACKFLOW.** The undesired reversal in the direction of flow of water in a plumbing system, caused by backpressure or back siphonage.

**BACKPRESSURE-** The backflow of potentially contaminated water into the potable water system because of the downstream side of the piping system pressure is greater than the supply pressure.

**BACKSIPHONAGE.** - The backflow of potentially contaminated water into the potable water system because of the pressure in the potable water system falling below atmospheric pressure of the plumbing fixtures, pools, tanks or vats connected to the potable water distribution piping.

**BACKFLOW PREVENTER** - A backflow prevention assembly, a backflow prevention device or other means or method to prevent backflow into the potable water supply.

**CROSS-CONNECTION** - Any actual or potential connection or arrangement between two otherwise separate piping systems, one containing potable water and the other containing an unknown liquid, steam, gas, solid, or chemical, whereby there exists the possibility for flow from one system to the other, with the direction of flow depending on the pressure differential between the two systems (see "Backflow").

**CROSS-CONNECTION CONTROL PROGRAM** – A program, or process to identify, control or eliminate cross connections, and prevent cross connections from allowing the backflow of non-potable water into a potable water supply.

**NONPOTABLE WATER.** Water not safe for drinking, personal or culinary utilization.

**POTABLE WATER** - Water free from impurities present in amounts sufficient to cause disease or harmful physiological effects and conforming to the bacteriological and chemical quality requirements of the Public Health Service Drinking Water Standards or the regulations of the public health authority having jurisdiction.

**PLUMBING CODE (WISCONSIN)** – Cross-Connection Control and Backflow Prevention specific Chapters and sections of the State Plumbing Codes.

**WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM** - The water service pipe, water distribution pipes, and the necessary connecting pipes, fittings, control valves and all appurtenances in or adjacent to the structure or premises.