WATER DIVISION:

Help Protect Your Water Supply!

Backflow is the undesired reversal of water flow, most often caused by pressure changes inside your home or in the pipes which deliver water to your home. If backflow occurs, contaminants could be pulled into your home's plumbing and public water mains, jeopardizing the quality of your water and others' water. To help prevent backflow at your home, adhere to the following:

- If you operate an irrigation sprinkler system, be sure the system is equipped with an approved backflow preventer device. Have the device tested annually by a certified plumber. Properly winterize your sprinkler system each fall and have all lines blown out to prevent against freezing.
- Don't submerge garden hoses in any liquid. When filling a swimming pool or even a 5-gallon bucket with a garden hose, maintain an "air gap" between the hose and the pool or bucket.
- Be mindful of what you connect to your garden hose. If you connect your garden hose to such things as hand-held fertilizer or weed-killer applicators, you risk those substances being sucked back into the hose (and possibly into your home or public water mains).
- To protect against back-siphonage, make sure all of your hose bibbs have vacuum breakers. Your hose bibb may already have an integral vacuum breaker (the breaker often looks like a small "mushroom" cap on the top of the bibb; look for ASSE 1019A written on it). If not, a hose connection vacuum breaker can be purchased separately (look for ASSE 1011 or ASSE 1052) and screwed directly onto the outlet threads of the bibb. Vacuum breakers are inexpensive and available at hardware/home improvement stores. They should be drained in the fall to avoid freezing.
- If you have an older toilet, ensure it has an anti-siphon fill valve/ballcock (ASSE 1002).
- Change point-of-use and whole-house water filters regularly. If you use a water filtration device in your home, be sure to replace the filter regularly. If not regularly replaced, filters can grow bacteria over time and release undesirable materials into your drinking water.