

DATE: December 29, 2025

TO: Kathleen Buchli, Code Reviser

FROM: Tami Thompson, Regulatory Affairs
Manager

Tami M. Thompson

SUBJECT: Rescind Interpretive Statement | Discontinuing Water Service Because of
a Cross-Connection Hazard Filed as WSR 01-04-038

This memo serves as notice that the Department of Health (department) is
rescinding Discontinuing Water Service Because of a Cross-Connection Hazard
which was filed January 31, 2001 and published in WSR 01-04-038.

This statement provided guidance on appropriate corrective actions for cross-
connection hazards. The department is rescinding this policy due to the adopted
changes to WAC 246-290-490 regarding cross-connection control corrective action.
Consequently, this interpretive statement is no longer necessary.

Individuals requiring additional information on this should contact Mike Means,
Water Quality, Policy, and Certification Manager for the Office of Drinking Water at
mike.means@doh.wa.gov.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

cc: Mike Means, Water Quality, Policy, and Certification Manager

OFFICE OF THE CODE REVISER
STATE OF WASHINGTON
FILED

DATE: January 27, 2026

TIME: 2:48 PM

WSR 26-04-055



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
DIVISION OF DRINKING WATER

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TDD Relay 1-800-833-6388

January 10, 2001

To: Interested Parties

From: *AR* Alan Rowe

Subject: Interpretative Statement Summary

Title of Interpretive Statement: Discontinuing Water Service Because of a Cross-Connection Hazard

Issuing Entity: Alan Rowe, Operations Manager
Division of Drinking Water

Description of Subject Matter:

Shutting off water service to a consumer is one, but not the only, corrective action option available to a purveyor when a cross-connection hazard is present on the consumer's property. During review of a purveyor's Cross-Connection Control Program or when responding to purveyor inquiries regarding corrective actions, DOH staff shall provide direction regarding other options available under the regulations. DOH staff shall also inform purveyors of circumstances under which shutting off water may present a greater public health or safety risk to the consumers and request that the purveyor consider these risks and other options available before discontinuing water service.

Division Contact: Ethan Moseng
Division of Drinking Water
POB 47829
Olympia, WA 98504-7829
(360) 236-3562

Effective Date: January 8, 2001

CODE REVISER'S OFFICE STATE OF WASHINGTON	
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Consistency Statement

January 8, 2001

Topic: Discontinuing Water Service Because of a Cross-Connection Hazard
Section: WAC 246-290-490(2)(j) & (k)

Issue/Question:

A purveyor is allowed to shut-off service to a user when a cross-connection hazard is present on his/her property and the connection is not isolated using an appropriate backflow prevention assembly (BPA). The circumstances could be the failure to install a BPA or failure to test a BPA already installed. During review of Cross-Connection Control (CCC) programs or responding to purveyor inquiries regarding WAC 246-290-490(3)(b), what direction should DOH staff provide to purveyors that include water shut-off as a corrective action option?

Discussion:

WAC 246-290-490(2)(i) states that a purveyor "shall take appropriate corrective action within its authority if...a cross-connection exists that is not controlled..." The corrective action may include, but is not limited to (1) denying or discontinuing water service to a consumer's premises, (2) requiring the consumer to install an approved backflow preventer, or (3) the purveyor installing an approved backflow preventer. Section 490(2)(k) further states that purveyors denying or discontinuing water service to a consumer's premises because of a cross-connection hazard shall notify the local administrative authority prior to taking such action except in the event of an emergency.

There are circumstances under which shutting off the water may present a greater risk to the consumer than the cross-connection alone presents. These include, but are not limited to: (1) the use of kidney dialysis on the premises, (2) loss of air conditioning in extreme heat, (3) supply to a fire suppression sprinkler system, (4) unsanitary conditions that might promote disease at essential commercial establishments such as care facilities (daycare, animal shelter, convalescent center, etc.) or medical facilities (hospital, clinic, physicians' offices, etc.) or, (5) a medical emergency present. DOH staff should direct the purveyor to consider these risks and other options available before discontinuing water service.

Decision:

DOH staff shall provide direction, consistent with the Recommended Water Shut-off Decision Process flowchart (on the next page), to purveyors as follows:

1. The purveyor may immediately shut off water if a public health emergency exists, including when a backflow is occurring or an unprotected cross-connection with sewage exists.
2. Before discontinuing water service because of the presence of any other cross-connection hazard, the purveyor should take the following steps in order:
 - a. If a CCC service agreement exists, implement the breach-of-contract remedies.
 - b. If a CCC service agreement does not exist, issue the shutoff notice to the consumer and local administrative authority to assure that sufficient warning is provided.
 - c. Try to determine if extenuating circumstances, such as those listed above, are present and document your efforts. Consider other options first such as installing a BPA, hiring a Backflow Assembly Tester and arranging a test, or installing a flow restrictor.
 - d. Shut off the water only as a last resort.

"This Consistency Statement is provided as guidance to drinking water staff to ensure consistent implementation of DDW program elements. Decisions by DDW staff to grant /deny an approval, or to take enforcement action, must be based on an RCW or WAC."

Recommended Water Shut-off Decision Process

