

A cross connection is a point in a plumbing system where the potable water supply is connected to a non-potable source. Briefly, a cross connection exists whenever the drinking water system is or could be connected to any non-potable source (plumbing fixture, equipment used in any plumbing system). Pollutants or contaminants can enter the safe drinking water system through uncontrolled cross connections when backflow occurs. Backflow is the unwanted flow of non-potable substances back into the consumer's plumbing system and/or public water system (i.e., drinking water).

Back siphonage (back flow) is caused by a negative pressure in the supply line to a facility or plumbing fixture. Back siphonage may occur during waterline breaks, when repairs are made to the waterlines, when shutting off the water supply, etc.

