

Cross-Connection Prevention is Key to Public Acceptance

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Issue:

Although there have been limited documented illnesses due to cross-connections between reclaimed and potable water, our industry must manage the perception of public health risks. The proliferation of reuse utilities is limited by public acceptance of reuse water. Safety measures protecting the public from potential health hazards are critical to the public acceptance of reuse water. The WateReuse Foundation's Reclaimed On-site Water Inspection and Cross-Connection Control Guidebook has been developed to establish the best practices for these safety measures.

Background:

There are a number of references available for cross connection prevention, however they do not specifically address sites with Reclaimed water or procedures that must be in place for a successful and safe reclaimed water program.

Approach:

A team of private consultants and public utilities was assembled to meet the WateReuse Foundation's objectives for the project.

The guidebook includes data and information on procedures, regulations and techniques from Environmental Protection Agency, the University of Southern California, and the American Water Works Association. The guidebook highlights case studies from municipalities with successful existing cross-connection programs. The

guidebook summarizes regulations from the four states with the most cross-connection programs in place (California, Texas, Florida, and Arizona).

The guidebook covers the risks associated with reclaimed water, a historical background on reuse, a discussion of existing programs from around the country, a summary of state regulations, an explanation of backflow prevention devices, and procedures needed to operate a reclaimed water system.

Challenges:

The guidebook had to be suitable for adoption by regulatory agencies and government utilities to aid in the management of cross-connection risks. The guidebook also needed to be broad enough to be useful all across the United States.

Key Words:

Public health

Water availability

Sources

Public perceptions