

Handheld sprays and water points adjacent to water closets

All new water points installed adjacent to a water closet (and not connected to a sanitary fixture) must be protected by a high hazard backflow prevention device.

This is a requirement under clause 12 of schedule 2 of the *Plumbing Regulations 2018*.

Background

Water supply systems should always be installed in such a way that they prevent contamination of the drinking water supply. Contamination is the unintended and dangerous flow of water from a potentially polluted water source into the drinking water supply due to back-pressure or back-siphonage.

To prevent cross-connection, all devices connected to a water supply system should have appropriate backflow protection. This is a requirement of AS/NZS 3500.1 Plumbing and drainage, Part 1: Water services, clause 4.2.2.

Handheld sprays have the potential to be positioned below the rim of a water closet pan and, if subject to back-siphonage, could contaminate the drinking water supply. Due to this potential hazard, handheld sprays require high hazard backflow protection.

During audits over the past five years, the VBA has identified an increasing number of handheld sprays installed without adequate backflow protection. Enquiries from practitioners who have been asked to install water points for the connection of handheld sprays have also increased.

How the new requirements work in practice

Water points installed adjacent to water closets may be used for the future connection of a handheld spray, even if a spray is not connected immediately. Because of this possibility, all water points installed adjacent to water closets must now be protected with a high hazard backflow prevention device.

High hazard backflow protection is not required for water points connected to a sanitary fixture.

Hose taps adjacent to urinals in public toilets (as required by the Plumbing Code of Australia) are also exempt from this requirement.

Further information on hazards, risks and suitable devices can be found in section 4 of AS/NZS 3500.1.

Note: Plumbing practitioners should also consult with the relevant Water Authority regarding requirements for containment protection.



Want to know more?

If you have a technical enquiry, please email plumbingtechnicaladvice@vba.vic.gov.au or call 1300 815 127.

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