



## STORMWATER: KEEPING OUR RIVERS CLEAN

Improperly disposed materials can enter storm drains and carry pollutants directly into the streams and rivers around Mesa County. This harms aquatic plants, fish, and other natural habitats.

As stormwater flows over driveways, lawns and sidewalks, it picks up garbage, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants. Stormwater can flow into a storm drain system or directly to a lake, stream, river or wetland body around the Grand Valley.

Anything that enters a storm drain system is discharged into the water bodies we use for swimming, fishing, rafting, irrigation and downstream drinking water sources. The Environmental Protection Agency believes that polluted runoff is the nation's greatest threat to clean water.

Homeowners can keep common pollutants like trash, pesticides, pet waste, grass clippings and automotive fluids off the ground and out of stormwater. Help keep our rivers clean!



*Garbage washed into Indian Wash in Grand Junction by stormwater.*

## Backflow Prevention

**A mechanical device called a backflow preventer can prevent a serious water condition from harming you or your family.**

A backflow preventer acts as a check valve to prevent used water from re-entering and potentially contaminating your drinking water.

If you have an irrigation system that is tied to your domestic water, you must have an approved backflow prevention device. This regulation does not apply if you are using water from an irrigation canal only.

### **How can my water get contaminated?**

If a car hits a fire hydrant down the block, water will pour out at full speed. This will cause the water pressure to decrease. Water can also reverse when pumpers are attached to hydrants to fight a fire in your neighborhood, or if there is a water main break in the vicinity of your home. When this happens, the flow of water in your pipes can actually reverse! If you do not have a backflow preventer installed, the next time you get a drink of tap water, it could be contaminated by the weed killers and lawn fertilizers you use on your lawn.

### **Why do I need it?**

Safety is a big issue. Chemicals and insecticides in your drinking water can cause several reactions. Reports from across the nation have included nausea, diarrhea, blisters, burning of the mouth and throat, anti-freeze poisoning, drowsiness, confusion, dizziness and unconsciousness.

Backflow preventers are now required by state and local regulations to be installed on your home and business sprinkler systems if they are tied into your domestic water supply. They also need to be installed on fire sprinkler systems, commercial facilities where chemicals are used, boiler systems, and other systems where water could become contaminated.

### **What do I need to do?**

Approved backflow preventers for residential sprinkler systems, if tied into your domestic water supply, can be purchased and installed by a plumber for around \$150 or by the homeowner. Grand Junction's Water Division will then inspect the installation at no charge. Each year after that, a certified tester must test and inspect it before you begin watering your lawn. This will cost from \$25-\$50.

A list of certified testers and approved backflow prevention devices is available upon request through the City Water Division.

### **Need to know more about backflow prevention?**

Call 244-1500, extension 778, for a recorded message about backflow devices. Or, call the City of Grand Junction Water Services Division at 256-4101. Information is also available on City of Grand Junction website [www.gjcity.org](http://www.gjcity.org)

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