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Building owners: protect drinking water through an effective cross-connection control program!

Owners of commercial, industrial, and institutional buildings, except for exclusively residential buildings with less than 3 floors and less than 9 apartments, are required by law to protect their buildings against possible drinking water contamination.

The most frequent cases of contamination occur inside a building, after the water has been delivered by the municipal water supply system. Contamination may be limited to one or more areas of the affected building, but it can also spread in the city water supply system and contaminate other buildings in the sector.

Cross-connections and contamination of drinking water

Seemingly innocuous behaviors can often be the source of contamination, as is the presence of unprotected cross-connections in the building plumbing system. A cross-connection means any existing or potential connections between a potable water distribution network and any source of pollution or contamination.

Contamination can occur when there is reversal of the normal direction of water flow. This is called a backflow. To protect against this phenomenon, it is mandatory to install backflow prevention devices everywhere a risk is detected.



The provisions of the Building Act

In Quebec, the Régie du bâtiment acts as the legislator. It enforces the Building Act, which is composed of the Construction Code and the Safety Code. It is in the latter that the provisions for cross connections protection of existing buildings can be found (Chapter 1, Article 7).

The Safety Code is based on two CSA standards: **B64.10-17/B64.10.1-17** – Selection and installation of backflow prevention devices / Maintenance and field testing of backflow prevention devices.

Cross-Connection Control Program

The consequences of contamination are often disastrous for human health and to the environment, not to mention the substantial legal fees involved in case of dispute, costs to decontaminate the affected facilities or to restore the company's reputation.

Therefore, a building analysis is recommended to determine if there is presence of risky cross-connections in the plumbing system. The implementation of a **cross-connection control program** will ensure compliance with the building codes and laws in force and will preserve the peace of mind of building owner!

[Contact Darspec experts](#) for a building analysis or for more information on the offered cross-connection control programs!

