



Advisory:

October 4, 2022

Subject:

Secondary suites, backwater valves, and protection from backflow

Background:

Backwater valves provide protection against the backflow of sewage into a building. The [National Plumbing Code 2020](#) requires fixture located below the level of the adjoining street and subject to backflow be protected. The acceptable means of protection can differ depending on the installation and application.

Advisory:

Builder, designers, and installers are reminded that when such protection is required a normally open back water valve may be utilized on a building drain or branch provided it does not serve more than one dwelling unit. Secondary suites are considered a separate dwelling unit per the definition found in [The National Plumbing Code 2020](#) as they operate under a single tenancy. On existing installations where a normally open backwater valve is installed and it serves more than one dwelling unit it may be necessary to remove, reconfigure, or install backwater protection to meet the minimum requirements of [The National Plumbing Code 2020](#).

Reference:

The [National Plumbing Code 2020 2.4.6.4](#). Protection from Backflow