



# City of Jackson

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**TO:** Mayor and Board of Aldermen

**FROM:** Janet Sanders, Director of Public Works

**DATE:** August 27, 2025

**RE:** Compliance with MoDNR Requirements for Backflow Prevention Device Tests

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A recent annual inspection by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MoDNR) of our water facilities cited a deficiency in the number of backflow prevention device test results on file with the City. Backflow prevention devices prevent accidental siphoning or backflow of contaminants into our public water system, and they are required for certain types of businesses and for fire sprinkler systems and landscape irrigation systems by MoDNR and our city code.

Due to the currently noted deficiency, our Water Facilities Foreman and I have, for the past few months, been actively seeking out all businesses and residential properties with backflow devices and making sure the test results are submitted by the property owner or their certified backflow prevention tester.

Notifications were initially mailed to the property owners of 81 business locations on May 27<sup>th</sup> informing them of the requirement to submit a backflow prevention test. A notice was also mailed on June 13<sup>th</sup> to 67 residential properties that were known to have lawn irrigation systems. Both mailings generated a significant number of responses. On July 11<sup>th</sup>, a second notice was mailed to 42 businesses who had not responded, either with their test result, or with evidence that they were not required to have a backflow device. Again a number of responses were generated.

To date, MoDNR has not issued a formal violation and has granted us two time extensions to continue to try to obtain all test results. 100% compliance is required.

The purpose of this email is to make the Board aware that a final notice is being mailed this week to the remaining 15 businesses and 5 residential locations who have still not responded. This notice gives a final deadline of September 15<sup>th</sup>, immediately after which we are required to shut off the water service until the property is in compliance

with a tested and properly functioning device. That is a drastic measure for a business to suffer, and the last thing we want to do is shut off anyone's water service! However, there is no other enforcement method available in our code which is based on MoDNR requirements. We must now fully enforce our code or face a formal MoDNR violation, more intensive inspections, and fines. In our best effort to prevent this, I am also in the process of calling all of these locations to personally discuss with them the necessity of having their system tested within the required timeframe.

In this process, we discovered there are 24 additional residential irrigation systems installed with a backflow alternative that was deemed approvable by the city several years ago but has now been found not to be testable. MoDNR does not allow an exemption from the testing requirement, so replacement backflow preventers must be installed at each of these locations. The cost of each replacement is \$950 each (one is \$1,150 due to a difference in parts). Due to this unique combination of circumstances, we do not feel that it should be the burden of the homeowner to pay for this replacement and doubt all the replacements could be successfully accomplished by property owners in the time frame allowed. The City will reimburse the contractor for the replacement costs.

As always, if you have questions, please contact me at [janders@jacksonmo.org](mailto:janders@jacksonmo.org) or 573-243-2300 x 2031.