

Ministerial Interpretation

The Construction Codes Act

PROTECTION FROM BACKFLOW FOR NPC 2020 Article 2.4.6.4.

Issue Number: NPC 2020 - 001
Date Effective: December 15, 2025
Expires: The day the National Plumbing Code 2025 comes into force in Saskatchewan.
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Purpose

To provide for clarification on how revisions and errata to the National Plumbing Code of Canada (NPC) 2020, Division B, Article 2.4.6.4. are to be interpreted while accounting for the Saskatchewan-specific amendments within *The Plumbing Code Regulations* (the PC Regulations).

Discussion

As part of the adoption of the NPC 2020, Saskatchewan revised the requirements in Article 2.4.6.4. on backflow valves with the goal of ensuring building owners had sufficient protection from sewer backups. While the wording in NPC 2020 alluded to increased protection, it was determined that the actual technical requirements did not provide sufficient coverage. As such, Saskatchewan amended the NPC 2020 at the time of its adoption to ensure building owners installed backflow valves in sufficient numbers and locations to provide adequate protection from sewer backups.

With the publication of the revisions and errata in March 2025, Codes Canada reordered and renumbered Article 2.4.6.4. of NPC 2020 to more fully explain the intent for backflow protection and to promote greater clarity for code users. As revisions and errata are normally editorial or clerical in nature, they are automatically adopted by Saskatchewan, as required under Clause 5(1)(b) of the PC Regulations.

In doing so, the Saskatchewan amendments for requirements on backflow valves no longer refer to the correct sentences in Article 2.4.6.4. of the NPC. This ministerial interpretation will correct reference errors by aligning the Saskatchewan amendments to the NPC 2020 with the 2025 revisions and errata published by Codes Canada. This ministerial interpretation does not change the original technical requirements Saskatchewan adopted by amendment to the NPC 2020.

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NPC 2020 Division B Article 2.4.6.4. shall be interpreted with the following substituted:

“2.4.6.4. Protection from Backflow

- 1) Except as provided in Sentences (2) and (3), where a *building drain* or *branch* may be subject to *backflow* from a *fixture* or a public sewer, a *backwater valve* shall be installed on every *fixture drain* connected to them when the *fixture* is located below grade.
- 2) Where more than one *fixture* is in the same room and all are connected to the same *branch*, the *backwater valve* is permitted to be installed on the *branch*.
- 3) A *subsoil drainage pipe* that drains into a *sanitary drainage system* that is subject to surcharge shall be connected in such a manner that *sewage* cannot back up into the *subsoil drainage pipe*. (See Note A-2.4.6.4. (1)).
- 4) Where a *building drain* or *branch* may be subject to *backflow*, a *backwater valve* shall be installed in accordance with Sentences (1), (2), (5) and (6).
- 5) Except as provided in Sentence (6), a *backwater valve* is permitted to be installed in a *building drain*, provided the *backwater valve*
 - a) does not serve more than one *dwelling unit*, and
 - b) has a “normally open” design conforming to
 - i) CSA B70, “Cast iron soil pipe, fittings, and means of joining,”
 - ii) CSA B181.1, “Acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene (ABS) drain, waste, and vent pipe and pipe fittings,”
 - iii) CSA B181.2, “Polyvinylchloride (PVC) and chlorinated polyvinylchloride (CPVC) drain, waste, and vent pipe and pipe fittings,” or
 - iv) CSA B182.1, “Plastic drain and sewer pipe and pipe fittings,”.
- 6) A *backwater valve* or a gate valve that would prevent the free circulation of air shall not be installed in a *building drain* or in a *building sewer*.”

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Authority

Section 8 of *The Construction Codes Act*.

Jurisdiction

This interpretation will apply throughout Saskatchewan.

Original approved and signed by:

The Honourable Eric Schmalz
Minister of Government Relations