




## Memorandum

### Memorandum No: 23-128

**Date:** November 28, 2023

**To:** Honorable Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Commissioners

**From:** Greg Chavarria, City Manager   
Greg Chavarria (Nov 27, 2023 19:07 EST)

**Re:** Enforcement of Backflow Devices on Dedicated Irrigation Service Connections

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The City of Fort Lauderdale, similar to all drinking water system providers in the State of Florida, must have a Cross-Connection Control Program (CCCP) or what is commonly known as a Backflow Prevention Program. Backflow prevention is designed to protect the public water supply from contamination siphoned from the customer's plumbing system. This memo discusses the enforcement process for backflow compliance for dedicated service irrigation connections that have no backflow device.

Backflow prevention is accomplished by placing various types of one-way valves on the service line between the water meter and the property. Backflow devices are required per Section 28-153 of the City of Fort Lauderdale Municipal Code and 62-555.360 of the Florida Administrative Code. Their requirement is based on the risk of contamination to the public water supply due to the activity being conducted at each service location. These devices are tested on an annual basis to ensure they operate and are maintained properly for commercial connections and every two years for residential connections.

One aspect of the program that has consistently been challenging is compliance with dedicated irrigation service connections that service residential properties. These connections are separately metered from domestic water connections on residential property and have always required some type of backflow device. Irrigation systems connected to the public water system are considered a high hazard per the American Water Works Association manual on Backflow Prevention and Cross-Connection Control Recommended Practices.

The City began surveying property owners a few years ago to update our records and is moving forward with enforcing backflow compliance on dedicated service irrigation connections that according to our records have no backflow protection. There are currently 80 irrigation service connections that have been identified. This number is expected to increase as we continue with the inspection process.

Attached is the notice the City will be sending within the next 30 days to the 80 identified properties within the City's water utility service area and a map showing the locations by Commission District. Action will be required by the property owners to 1) request an inspection to verify the need for a backflow device, 2) add a backflow device, 3) remove the irrigation meter, or 4) remove the irrigation and service line. Estimated costs are outlined in the notice.

We anticipate that since many of these systems are on residential accounts and property owners may incur costs, many of our neighbors will have questions and may reach out directly to your office. Staff is requesting that those inquiries be routed to the City's Customer Service line at 954-828-8000 for tracking and resolution purposes. Thank you for your support in protecting our public drinking water supply.

For additional information please contact Todd Hiteshew, Environmental Compliance Manager, at [thiteshew@fortlauderdale.gov](mailto:thiteshew@fortlauderdale.gov).

Attachments:

1. Sample Letter-Notice
2. Map of Irrigation Accounts without Backflow Protection
3. Backflow Flyer
4. List of 80 Properties

c: Anthony G. Fajardo, Assistant City Manager  
Susan Grant, Assistant City Manager  
Thomas J. Ansbro, City Attorney  
David R. Soloman, City Clerk  
Patrick Reilly, City Auditor  
Department Directors  
CMO Managers

## ATTACHMENT 1: SAMPLE LETTER/NOTICE

«OWNERNAME»  
«LOCATION\_ADDRESS»  
«LOCATION\_CITY», «LOCATION\_STATE» «LOCATION\_ZIP»

### **Re: Backflow Prevention Requirement for Dedicated Irrigation Service**

Dear Neighbor,

The City of Fort Lauderdale Public Works Department is reaching out to you today because you have a dedicated irrigation service connection (i.e., for watering your landscaping) that is separate from your potable water service (i.e., water used for drinking, cooking, and washing). We request your assistance in protecting the City's municipal drinking water system.

State and City regulations require that irrigation service connections to be protected with a backflow prevention assembly device and tested on an annual (commercial) or biennial basis (residential). A backflow prevention assembly will prevent a potential cross-connection event (back pressure, back siphonage) from occurring and creating a hazard to the municipal drinking water system (see the enclosed flyer for more information).

*A recent review of our records revealed that you do not have the required backflow device on your irrigation service line. Action is required on your part to come into compliance with this requirement. The City's goal is to have all irrigation lines protected by a backflow assembly device by March 1, 2024.*

Below are a few potential options available for you to consider to come into compliance:

- 1) Install and certify a backflow prevention assembly by a licensed plumbing contractor. Please see the attached **Backflow Prevention Assembly Installation or Certification Instructions.**
- 2) Remove irrigation meter (only). **Please contact Utility Billing (954-828-5150) for assistance or <https://www.fortlauderdale.gov/government/departments-a-h/finance/utility-billing>**
  - Irrigation service line will remain (account still active).
  - You will continue to pay a service availability fee.
  - If you want to use the service line again, you can call Utility Billing (954-828-5150) to request the installation of the irrigation meter and pay the meter fee and backflow will need to be installed and/or tested.

**Water/Irrigation Service Availability Monthly Charges (FY2023 Utility Rates)**

Meter Size (inches)	Rate
5/8	\$8.26
3/4	\$10.99
1	\$16.46
1-1/2	\$30.14
2	\$46.53
3	\$98.49
4	\$168.84

\* For services using domestic service lines for irrigation be aware of possible increased bill incurred due to sewage charges, required backflow protection device per plumbing code and plumber/ permit fees.

3) Remove the dedicated irrigation service connection (Meter removal and line abandonment). **Please contact Utility Billing (954-828-5150) for assistance or [\\*\\*\\*\\*\\*.fortlauderdale.gov/government/departments-a-h/finance/utility-billing](http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/government/departments-a-h/finance/utility-billing)**

- You will no longer pay a service availability fee and the service line (account) will be terminated.
- If the service is re-established in the future, you will have to pay a new service line fee (tapping charge – see table below) and any additional fees associated to a new service line (fee is based on size).

**Tapping Charges (FY2023 Utility Rates)**

Service Line	Irrigation Meter
5/8"	\$1,419.56
3/4"	\$1,475.12
1"	\$1,583.03
1-1/2"	\$2,564.14
2"	\$3,256.49

\* For sizes greater than a two-inch tap and service, such charges shall be estimated and billed upon a basis of actual cost, including materials, labor, equipment, and a percentage allowance for administrative and overhead costs.

Together, we can protect our drinking water system from contamination.

If you have a backflow device, believe you have received this notice in error, or have general questions, please contact Elaine Velez, Senior Administrative Assistant at 954-828-7514.

To schedule a courtesy inspection to verify if a backflow device is present, please contact Keith Chin, Environmental Inspector II at 954-828-7715.

## **Backflow Prevention Assembly Installation or Certification Instructions**

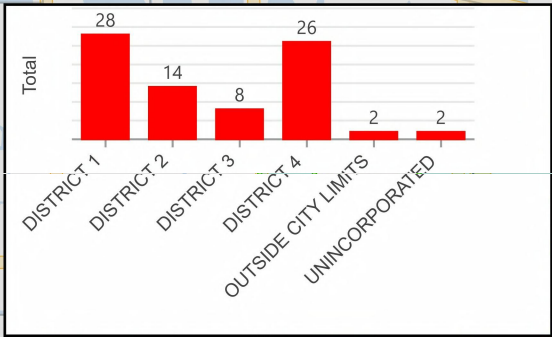
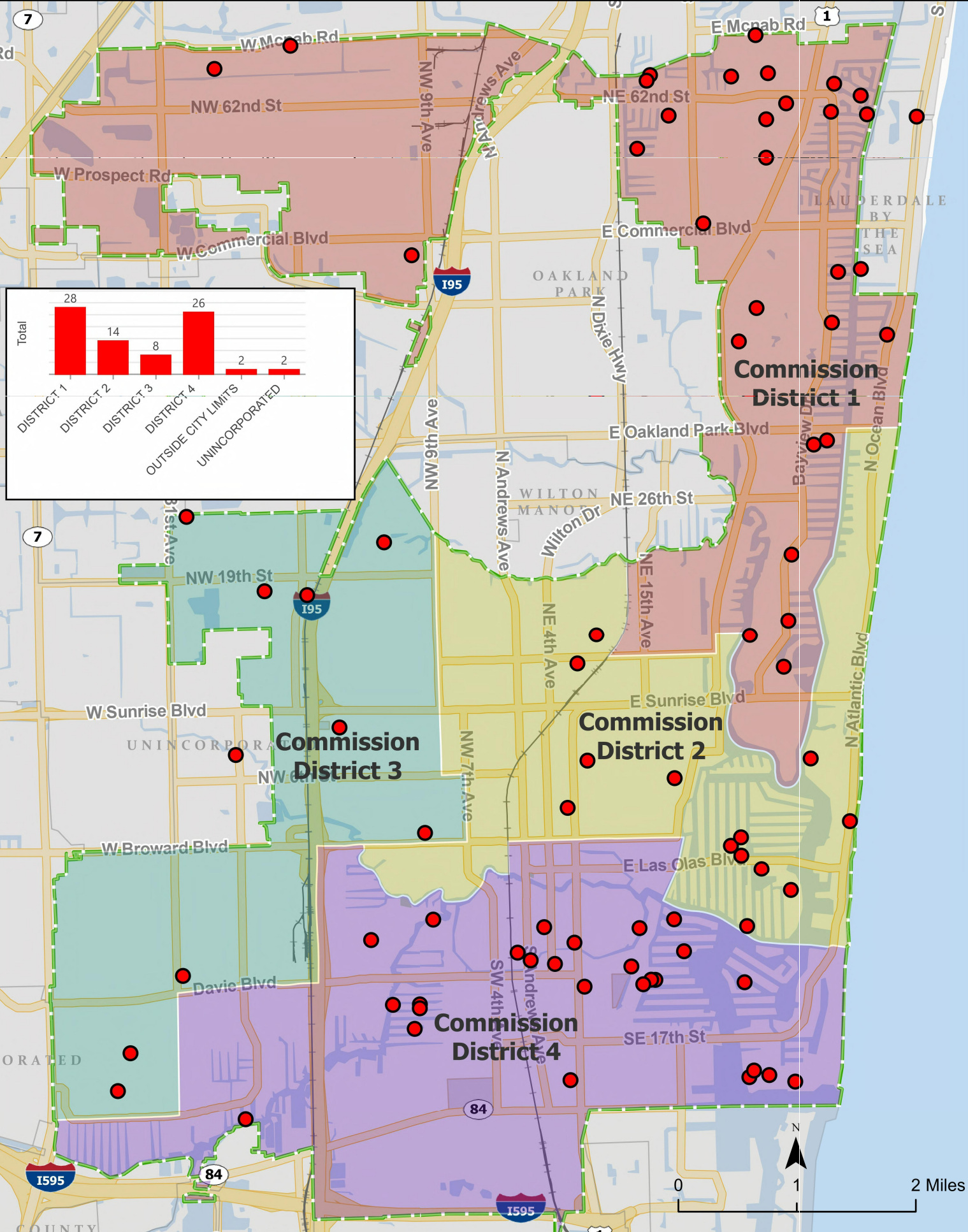
Any work being performed on a backflow prevention assembly must be done by a licensed plumber who is also a certified backflow prevention technician.

1. For service meters ***without*** backflow protection, verify the licensed backflow technician/plumber has submitted a completed permit application and passing backflow test report to both:
  - a) [epermit@fortlauderdale.gov](mailto:epermit@fortlauderdale.gov)
  - b) [www.bsionlinetracking.com](http://www.bsionlinetracking.com)
  
2. For service meters ***with*** an existing backflow device, verify the licensed backflow technician/plumber has submitted a passing backflow test report and the \$45 fee to (note: typically, this \$45 is already part of the contractor price, but please verify):
  - a) [www.bsionlinetracking.com](http://www.bsionlinetracking.com)





# Irrigation Accounts With No Backflows





Every drinking water system in Florida must have a cross connection control program, more commonly known as a backflow prevention program. (See Section 62-555.360 Cross Connection Control for Public Water Systems <https://www.flrules.org/gateway/RuleNo.asp?!D=62-555.360>) Backflow prevention is designed to protect the public water supply from contamination from customer's plumbing systems. For more information about backflow prevention, please visit the Florida DEP site: <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/drinkingwater/bfp.htm>.

### **Who does this requirement apply to?**

Backflow prevention devices are required on certain hazards determined by the City. The City will notify those property owners that are required to have a backflow prevention device.

### **Who is managing the City's Backflow Program?**

The City of Fort Lauderdale has contracted with Backflow Solutions Inc. (BSI) to manage the backflow certification process. BSI has experience managing similar programs for other municipalities across the country. BSI will serve as the primary point of contact for backflow recertifications within the City of Fort Lauderdale and can be contacted at 800-414-4990 or through their website at <https://bsionline.com>.

### **What are my responsibilities?**

EVERY backflow device must be certified annually or biennially depending on the type of hazard. The results of the certification are required to be submitted online at [www.bsionlinetracking.com](http://www.bsionlinetracking.com).

### **How do I comply with these requirements?**

Customers with known devices will receive a notification and reminder directly from BSI Online that testing is due. Once the certification is complete, the testing company will enter that information directly into BSI's online reporting system.

**If you have any questions regarding the program please contact BSI at 800-414-4990. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.**

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## Why now?

State regulations (Florida Administrative Code (FAC) Chapter 62) related to protecting the public water supply require that certain commercial businesses, dedicated residential and commercial irrigation systems, fire services and cooling towers must have an approved testable backflow prevention device installed.

All connections, regardless of the installation date, are required to be in compliance. The City's cross-connection and backflow ordinance in compliance with state regulations can be found in Section 28-152 through Section 28-157 of City Code.

## What if I don't comply with local, state and federal mandates?

Your water service will be terminated to protect the public water system.

## What is a cross-connection?

Cross-connection refers to any actual or potential physical connection between a potable water line and any pipe, vessel or machine containing a non-potable fluid or has the possibility of containing a non-potable fluid, solid or gas that could potentially enter the potable water system by backflow.

## What is backflow?

Backflow is the undesirable reversal of flow of water, liquids, mixtures or substances into the public water distribution pipe system from any source or sources.

## When might backflow occur?

Inadequate plumbing and events such as water main breaks or fire hydrant use can contribute to backflow conditions. Backflow may also occur when pressure in the property owner's equipment is greater than the pressure in the drinking water line.

## What is a backflow prevention assembly?

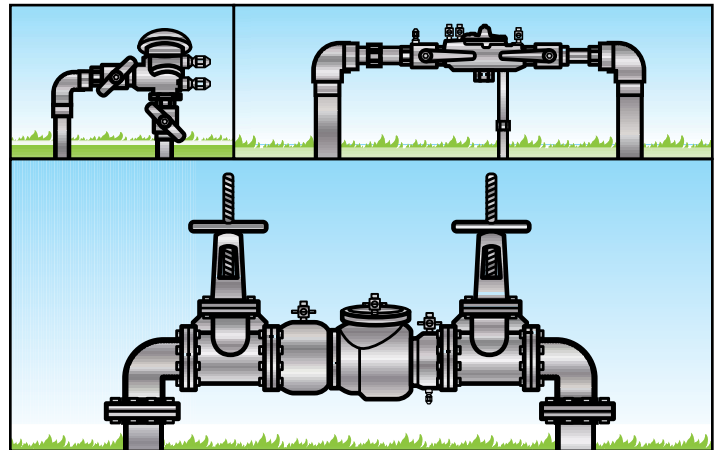
Backflow prevention assemblies are designed to prevent contaminated water or chemicals from a property flowing back into the public drinking water supply system.

## Why are backflow prevention assemblies required?

Backflow prevention assemblies are an important component of the City's drinking water protection program and are legally mandated under Florida rules for those water service lines identified as posing a risk to the public water supply.

## What is the cost of backflow prevention assemblies?

Installation costs vary depending on the assembly and selected licensed plumbers' labor costs. The City also requires a plumbing permit to install these devices. The investment to install and



Backflow prevention assemblies protect our drinking water supply.

maintain the assembly is minimal compared to the potential public safety hazard and liability of a backflow incident. It is a State requirement in order to protect the potable water supply for everyone.

## Who can install a backflow prevention assembly?

- Domestic backflow assemblies shall be installed by a licensed plumbing contractor. (Plumbing Permit required)
- Lawn irrigation backflow assemblies shall be installed by a licensed plumbing or lawn irrigation contractor. (Plumbing Permit required)
- Backflow assemblies for boat docks shall be installed by a licensed plumbing or fire sprinkler contractor. (Fire Permit required)
- Backflow assemblies for fire sprinkler systems to any building shall be installed by a licensed fire sprinkler contractor. (Fire Permit required)

## Who can Test a backflow prevention assembly?

Domestic and irrigation service backflow assemblies may be tested by a person who holds a current certification from an accredited institution (i.e.: TREEO, American Society of Sanitary Engineers) approved by the Public Works Director.

Fire service backflow assemblies must be tested by a licensed fire inspection company which is also certified for backflow testing.

## Additional website resources:

### State of Florida:

[\\*\\*\\*.dep.state.fl.us/water/drinkingwater/bfp.htm](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/drinkingwater/bfp.htm)

### Broward County:

[\\*\\*\\*.broward.org/WaterServices/Pages/BackflowCertification.aspx](http://www.broward.org/WaterServices/Pages/BackflowCertification.aspx)

### City of Fort Lauderdale:

[www.fortlauderdale.gov/CCCP](http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/CCCP)



#### ATTACHMENT 4: LIST OF PROPERTIES

ADDRESS	CITY COMMISSION DISTRICT	TYPE
4820 NW 10TH TER	1	Irrigation
3912 NE 22ND AVE	1	Irrigation
1467 NE 63RD CT	1	Irrigation
2061 NE 63RD CT	1	Irrigation
4041 N OCEAN BLVD	1	Irrigation
2141 NE 68TH ST	1	Irrigation
1349 MIDDLE RIVER DR	1	Irrigation
5621 NE 22ND AVE	1	Irrigation
3011 NE 40TH CT	1	Irrigation
2820 NE 30TH ST	1	Irrigation
1460 NE 63RD CT	1	Irrigation
5910 NE 21ST DR	1	Irrigation
3060 NE 46TH ST	1	Irrigation
2132 BAYVIEW DR	1	Irrigation
30 N COMPASS DR	1	Irrigation
2847 NE 30TH ST	1	Irrigation
101 BAY COLONY DR	1	Irrigation
1431 NE 57TH ST	1	Irrigation
2220 NE 61ST CT	1	Irrigation
1521 NE 59TH CT	1	Irrigation
5931 BAYVIEW DR	1	Irrigation
6741 NW 27TH WAY	1	Irrigation
6890 NW 21ST TER	1	Irrigation
2642 NE 12TH ST	1	Irrigation
2165 NE 63RD CT	1	Irrigation
1831 NE 51ST ST	1	Irrigation
4301 NE 23RD AVE	1	Irrigation
2713 NE 15TH ST	1	Irrigation
900 NE 14TH PL	2	Irrigation
2627 ALAMANDA CT	2	Irrigation
600 BAYSHORE DR	2	Irrigation
729 ISLE OF PALMS DR	2	Irrigation
510 NE 17TH AVE	2	Irrigation
628 NE 7TH AVE	2	Irrigation
325 SUNSET DR	2	Irrigation
33 NURMI DR	2	Irrigation

540 NE 4TH ST	2	Irrigation
59 ROYAL PALM DR	2	Irrigation
1231 NE 7TH AVE	2	Irrigation
1 ROYAL PALM DR	2	Irrigation
209 N ATLANTIC BLVD	2	Irrigation
1507 SE 12TH CT	2	Irrigation
1001 NW 1ST ST	3	Irrigation
1800 NW 23RD AVE	3	Irrigation
1817 NW 24TH TER	3	Irrigation
1440 NW 22ND ST	3	Irrigation
3430 SW 17TH ST	3	Irrigation
2131 SW 35TH AVE	3	Irrigation
1733 NW 9TH ST	3	Irrigation
3020 NE 26TH ST	3	Irrigation
1111 SE 12TH WAY	4	Irrigation
1241 S MIAMI RD	4	Irrigation
1433 SE 12TH CT	4	Irrigation
2024 HARBOURVIEW DR	4	Irrigation
1230 CORDOVA RD	4	Irrigation
901 S FEDERAL HWY	4	Irrigation
80 BAY COLONY LN	4	Irrigation
1100 S ANDREWS AVE	4	Irrigation
1112 SE 3RD AVE	4	Irrigation
2411 SW 27TH AVE	4	Irrigation
1287 N RIO VISTA BLVD	4	Irrigation
2008 SE 4TH AVE	4	Irrigation
1646 SE 7TH ST	4	Irrigation
1109 TANGELO ISLE	4	Irrigation
801 SW 15TH AVE	4	Irrigation
2000 ADMIRALS WAY	4	Irrigation
707 SE 3RD AVE	4	Irrigation
1001 COCONUT DR	4	Irrigation
2511 LAGUNA TER	4	Irrigation
1949 TWIN DOLPHIN LN	4	Irrigation
1736 SE 10TH ST	4	Irrigation
100 SW 10TH ST	4	Irrigation
2020 SE 26TH AVE	4	Irrigation
1121 AVOCADO ISLE	4	Irrigation
1120 AVOCADO ISLE	4	Irrigation

1337 AVOCADO ISLE	4	Irrigation
1 GATEHOUSE RD	OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS	Irrigation
304 ALLENWOOD DR	OUTSIDE CITY LIMITS	Irrigation
1159 NW 30TH AVE	UNINCORPORATED	Irrigation
2716 NW 8TH ST	UNINCORPORATED	Irrigation






# Commission Memo 23-128 Enforcement of Backflow Devices

Final Audit Report

2023-11-28

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## "Commission Memo 23-128 Enforcement of Backflow Devices" History

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