



ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC HEALTH

A Healthier Today For A Better Tomorrow

Bernard J. Turnock, M.D., Director

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Regional Engineers / Plumbing Inspectors
FROM: Dean Thady, Plumbing Consultant, Division of Environmental Health
DATE: September 11, 1989
SUBJECT: Lawn Sprinkler Systems

The Department has developed a policy on lawn sprinkler systems that is more stringent than Plumbing Code Rule 890.1550(f). Attached are Plumbing Program Policy #2A and the Lawn Sprinkler Policy. Please read and follow accordingly.

Dean Thady
Dean Thady, Plumbing Consultant
Division of Environmental Health

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Attachments

EXHIBIT "D"



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Bernard J. Turnock, M.D., Director

9/29/89

CC KG
JR
JS
SS
LK

SEPTEMBER 11, 1989

LAWN SPRINKLER POLICY

The Plumbing Code requires that the potable water supply shall not be connected to non-potable water and shall be protected from backflow and back siphonage. Among the requirements for protection against cross connection is Plumbing Code Rule 890.1550(f) for lawn sprinkler systems. The current rule allows the use of vacuum breakers, if they are placed at least 6 inches above the highest head and on the discharge side of all valves with no back pressure. The Department has discovered that the following two circumstances are prevalent:

Over the past eighteen months, Illinois Department of Public Health and the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency have received several reports of lawn sprinkler systems being fitted with a saddle connection to a plastic drum, used to aspirate chemicals through the sprinkler system and onto the lawn. Another arrangement which is popular in both Missouri and Illinois is the removal of one sprinkler head, attachment of a quick connector and the pumping of chemicals through the sprinkler system by some firms in the lawn care industry. The chemicals in question in both cases include fertilizer, pesticides, herbicides and insecticides. Once a connection is made to the potable water supply system, maintenance and alterations are often performed by a homeowner or maintenance man unfamiliar with proper protection of the potable water system. Due to the vulnerability of the potable water system once a connection is in place, it is the opinion of both I.E.P.A. and the I.D.P.H. that the potential hazard should be classified as a high hazard. Therefore, to protect the potable water supply, the Department will require all new lawn sprinkler systems to have a reduced pressure principle backflow assembly.

Dean Thady

Dean Thady, Plumbing Consultant
Division of Environmental Health

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