

Installing an RPZ Valve

This fact sheet explains what RPZ valves are, when they should be used, and the notification requirements imposed upon the installer set out in legislation.

What is an RPZ valve?

An RPZ Valve (reduced pressure zone valve), is a device designed to be fitted directly onto a cold-water supply pipe that is supplying any pipes or apparatus deemed to be carrying a Fluid Category Risk 4 substance. It is designed to prevent the risk of contaminated harmful water back-siphoning into the drinking water supply. A Fluid Category 4 Risk substance is deemed to represent a significant health hazard due to the concentration of toxic substances. Examples of where an RPZ valve could be considered for backflow protection include:

- A fire sprinkler system (using anti-freeze solutions);
- Bottle washing apparatus;
- Sterilising units in a dairy;
- Processes in brewery or distillation premises;
- Commercial heating systems;
- House union tap situations in industrial premises.

Note: this is not an exhaustive list.

There are pros and cons to an RPZ valve installation:

Pros

- Can be fitted instead of a tank with Fluid Category Risk 4 backflow protection;
- Removes all legionella-related risks that occur as a result of fitting a tank;
- RPZ Valves are small, relatively cheap, easy to fix and reliable.

Cons

- Must be fitted by a qualified and registered installer;
- Must be maintained and tested annually by an approved tester who will file the annual certificate with the water company.



[Examples of RPZ Valves]

Legal Requirement

Under the requirements of Regulation 5 in the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999, you must advise SES Water of any planned alterations to your internal plumbing system.

An RPZ valve is a unique type of valve that offers backflow protection for substances that pose significant risk of harm to health, and they require a yearly test to prove it is functioning correctly. The annual testing is a fundamental requirement of an RPZ valve installation. Failure to keep up with this may result in the temporary suspension of the water supply or alternatively we could insist on the installation of an alternative, suitable backflow arrangement.

The commissioning, testing and maintenance of an RPZ valve should only be carried out by an accredited tester. A current list of accredited RPZ valve testers can be obtained from WRAS via their website www.wras.co.uk. Testing of the valve must be carried out annually and the 'test report' sent to SES Water within 10 working days.

For further information contact the Water Regulations team at
SES Water, London Road, Redhill RH1 1LJ
Email: waterregulations@seswater.co.uk

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Notification

Notification is free, easy to do and is a requirement under Regulation 5 of the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999. Failure to do so could result in prosecution or the need to carry out costly remedial works in the future. Notifications should be sent to us via email at: waterregulations@seswater.co.uk

If you are planning to install a type BA device - Verifiable Backflow Preventer with Reduced Pressure Zone (RPZ Valve) - then you need to get permission from us before you start.

Find out more

To find out more about the Water Supply (Water Fittings) Regulations 1999 and for information regarding notification, visit seswater.co.uk or the Water Regulations Advisory Scheme at wras.co.uk.

Please contact our Water Regulations team for more details.
waterregulations@seswater.co.uk