

Water Emergency Preparedness for Backflow Flow Prevention Assembly (BFPA) Owners

Natural disasters, power outages, blackouts, or other unexpected events can disrupt the ability of the Honolulu Board of Water Supply (BWS) to provide water service to the community. Since water quality and water availability may be seriously impacted, the BWS encourages backflow prevention assembly (BFPA) owners to be prepared and to plan in advance for a water emergency.

How can I prepare my BFPA for a water emergency?

In preparing for an emergency, BFPA owners should have contingency plans in place to prepare for a loss of water service.

- Make arrangements with your plumber to test and/or repair your BFPA after power and water service is restored.
- Stay tuned to media reports: The BWS will issue water information bulletins and appropriate actions to be taken through the media. Take precautionary actions only when directed by the BWS.
- Some precautionary actions could include executing water conservation measures, disconnecting devices that automatically use water, shutting off your main water valve, storing water or keeping water use to an absolute minimum, etc. In the event of an actual emergency, the BWS would issue detailed instructions on what actions should be taken.

What do I do if there is a power outage?

Keep water use to an absolute minimum. All of the BWS's pumps need electricity to operate. This means that during a power outage, the BWS will have limited ability to pump water out of our wells and other water sources and up to our reservoirs. Until power can be restored, the water left in your community's reservoirs will be all the water that is available to you, so it is essential that residents use water sparingly – for drinking and sanitation purposes only. Turn off or disconnect any devices or fixtures that regularly draw water. Such devices include automatic icemakers and irrigation systems.

Preparing your BFPA for the power outage

In an effort to prevent potential problems with your BFPA device, take the following actions prior to losing water service:

- Close the Number 2 shutoff valve (outlet valve) and then close the Number 1 shutoff valve (inlet valve) on your BFPA prior to the water going out. This will keep your BFPA pressurized.
- Have on hand a BFPA repair kit for your specific BFPA. This will enable your plumber to repair your device once water service is restored. Having the repair kit

on hand will facilitate any repairs that need to be made to your BFPA so that water service to your property and facility can be restored as soon as possible.

- If your BFPA cannot be repaired, your water meter will be secured by BWS and water service will not be restored until your BFPA has been repaired.

The BWS will make every effort to restore water service once the electrical power has been restored.

For more information on how to prepare your BFPA for an emergency, contact the Board of Water Supply Cross Connection and Control Section at 808-748-5470.