

Assisted bathing equipment

What are the water fittings regulations/byelaws?

These national regulations protect drinking water by ensuring plumbing systems are designed, installed and used safely.

The information provided in this leaflet will highlight the areas of backflow risk and help installers, as well as those responsible for and using assisted bathing equipment in hospital, nursing and care homes to be safe.



When do they apply to assisted bathing equipment?

If bathing equipment has any form of mains water supply the regulations/byelaws apply.

How do you comply?

1. Ensure the equipment is of an appropriate quality and standard
2. Ensure the installation is safe by notifying the local water undertaker at least 10 working days before the equipment is installed
3. To prevent bathing and wastewater contaminating drinking water supplies install the correct level of backflow protection.



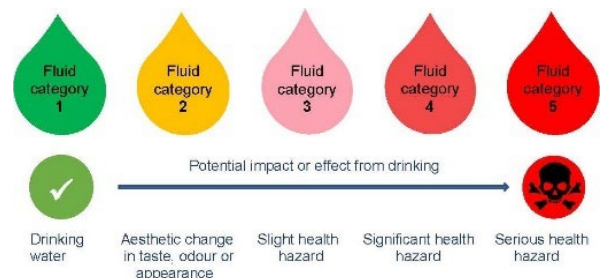
For further information please refer to the Water Regs UK website www.waterregsuk.co.uk.

Notification is a simple and essential check to help minimise the contamination risks to water supplies within premises as well as beyond, and to help prevent waste of water. Advanced notification of proposed plumbing work in hospitals, nursing and care homes, is always required unless there is an exemption for work undertaken by an approved contractor. In all circumstances notification is recommended.

What is backflow?

Backflow occurs when fluid in a plumbing system flows in the opposite to the intended or normal direction of flow. The regulations/byelaws classify backflow risks by fluid categories or risks to health.

Backflow is not theoretical rather an ever present threat to people's health.



What is backflow Protection?

To prevent backflow a barrier (backflow protection) which stops contaminated fluid flowing backwards is needed. The regulations/byelaws identify several different backflow prevention arrangements and devices, each having a rating based on fluid category and type of backflow.

What level of backflow risk is bathing equipment?

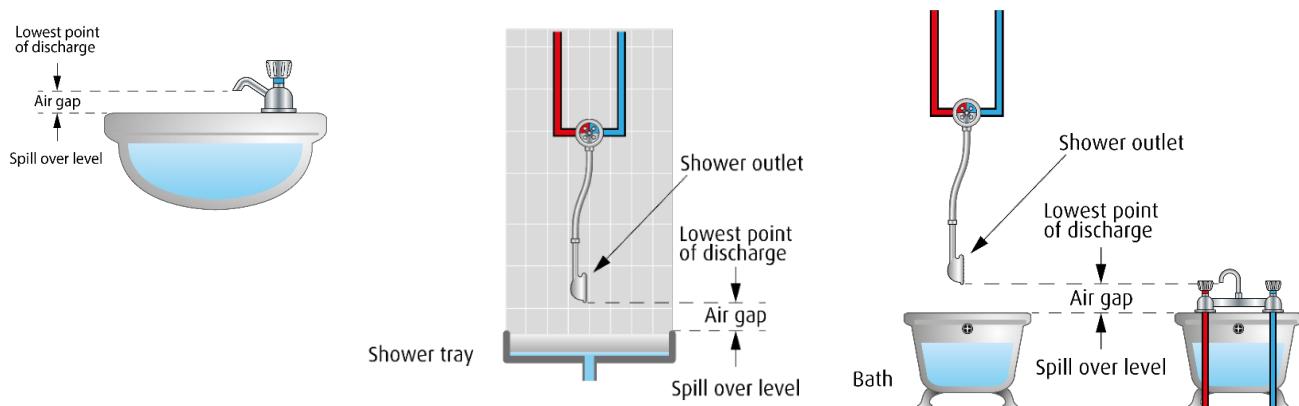
Bathing equipment in hospitals, nursing and care homes is categorised as a fluid category 5 risk, a serious health hazard. To protect patients, residents and staff, as well as the wider community, the supplies to all tap and shower outlets must be protected by a backflow arrangement rated as providing fluid category 5 protection. This is why it is so important to take advantage of the check offered by water undertakers.

Please note when installing an assisted bath which incorporates backflow protection it is important to verify this meets UK requirements in full. If there is no acceptable built in backflow protection the appliance must be supplied via an acceptable fluid category 5 backflow protection arrangement.



Fluid category 5 backflow protection arrangements

Taps, shower outlets and assisted baths must be protected by a suitable form of fluid category 5 backflow protection. In practice this means being supplied from storage incorporating an adequate air gap (such as a Type AB air gap) or maintaining a gap between a tap and shower outlet and spillover level of 20 mm or twice the diameter of the supply pipe (whichever is the greater) measured as shown below. Please note this gap, which also applies to toilets must be maintained at all times, which may mean the shower hose has to be permanently restrained or shortened.



Checklist



Can the appliance be installed?

Check with your local water undertakers to confirm the proposed assisted bathing installation will be compliant.



Is all the necessary paperwork in place?

If your property was inspected by the local water undertaker, you may be asked several questions about bathing equipment. To help answer these it is recommended a technical file be maintained on site. This should include the letter of consent from the local water undertaker, any certificates of compliance issued by an approved contractor and the manufacturer's installation and maintenance instructions. The manufacturer's literature will help to confirm the make and model of machine. Failure to provide all the information required could result in enforcement action being taken.



Has the right level of backflow protection been installed?

As part of their check the local water undertaker will confirm the level of risk associated with bathing equipment and highlight any suitability issues associated with the proposed form of backflow protection.

Don't forget backflow protection arrangements not only need to be suitable but also of an appropriate quality and standard. **To keep patients, residents, staff and the wider community safe, always check with the local water undertaker that the backflow arrangement meets UK requirements.**