

Installation of Backflow Assemblies by Landscape Construction Professionals

Dates

Issued October 2026

Subject

Plumbing license exemption allowing the installation of backflow assemblies for irrigation and ornamental water features by landscape construction professionals appropriately licensed by the Landscape Contractors Board.

This clarification is issued through a joint effort between the Oregon Landscape Contractors Board and the Oregon Building Codes Division to ensure this licensing exemption is used and enforced appropriately and equitably statewide.

Questions

ORS 447.060(2) provides an exemption from plumbing licensing for landscape construction professionals who are licensed through the Landscape Contractors Board (LCB) to install, repair, or maintain backflow assemblies supplying water to irrigation systems and ornamental water features.

1. Through the exemption in ORS 447.060(2), is a plumbing business license or journeyman plumber license required to install, repair, or maintain backflow assemblies supplying water to irrigation systems and ornamental water features?
2. Is the installation required to meet current provisions of the Oregon Plumbing Specialty Code (OPSC) and are plumbing permits and inspections required?
3. What is the scope of work allowed under this exemption for the installation of backflow assemblies supplying water to irrigation systems and ornamental water features?

Answers

1. No.
 - a. This installation can be done by a landscape construction professional with either an irrigation and backflow phase or all phase license issued by LCB, and it cannot be done by an unlicensed employee. The contracting business does not need to hold a plumbing business license issued by BCD. The installer does not need to hold a journeyman plumber license issued by BCD.
 - b. Repair or maintenance of backflow assemblies supplying water to irrigation systems and ornamental water features requires the landscape construction professional performing the work to be certified as a backflow assembly tester by the Oregon Health Authority while working under an LCB business license.
2. Yes.

- a. Installation of backflow assemblies protecting a domestic potable water system and associated supply piping shall be installed in accordance with all applicable provisions of the OPSC and the manufacturer's installation instructions.
 - b. Pursuant to ORS 447.020 and OAR 918-780-0065, permits and inspections are required for plumbing installations as defined in ORS 447.010. The installation of backflow assemblies supplying water to irrigation systems and ornamental water features requires the issuance of a plumbing permit and required inspections by the local building department. Local building departments shall issue appropriate plumbing permits to the landscape contracting business.
3. The scope of work under the exemption in ORS 447.060(2) is further described in ORS 671.615 and allows for the following:
- a. Making a connection of a branch serving an irrigation system or ornamental water feature to an existing building supply or water distribution pipe. This includes cutting the existing water supply piping and installing a branch tee and extending the branch to the backflow assembly. Installations of branch piping up to the backflow assembly shall be made in accordance with all applicable provisions of the OPSC.
- Building Supply and Water Distribution Pipe are defined in OPSC Chapter 2:
- Building Supply.*** *The pipe carrying potable water from the water meter or another source of water supply to a building or other point of use or distribution on the lot.*
- Water Distribution Pipe.*** *In a building or premises, a pipe that conveys potable water from the building supply pipe to the plumbing fixtures and other water outlets.*
- b. Installation of a listed and approved backflow assembly in accordance with all applicable provisions of the OPSC including but not limited to access and clearance, protection from freezing, initial testing, and the manufacturer's installation instructions.
 - c. Repair of existing backflow assemblies and supply branch piping serving irrigation or ornamental water features may be done by landscape construction professionals who also hold a backflow assembly tester certification issued by the Oregon Health Authority.

Contact

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