

**INCIDENT:** Backflow Contamination in City Drinking Water  
**LOCATION:** Boca Raton, California  
**SOURCE:** [www.abpa.org](http://www.abpa.org)  
**DATE OF INCIDENT:** 9/1/2012

The Palm Beach County Health Department found a host of long-standing problems with the city's drinking water including fecal matter and other ingredients found in wastewater. The City did not have the proper check valves to keep reclaimed water from mixing with potable water. Anyone drinking the potable water may have been drinking more than potable water. The official Notice of Violation from the Palm Beach health officials included: 1) Inadequate cross-contamination safeguards to prevent wastewater from entering drinking water lines. The Health Department found the city had been aware of problems since February 2006; 2) Illegal chemical injection system hooked up to city water lines. This violation covers eight years; 3) Reconnecting disinfected wells to city lines without adequate microbiological surveys to ensure removal of harmful contaminants; and 4) Failure to conduct thorough tests for the presence of lead and copper in water lines.