

INCIDENT: Contractor error cause of contamination - pays City for backflow action
LOCATION: Lockport, New York
SOURCE: Lockport Union Sun & Journal
DATE OF INCIDENT: 5/18/2015

The City of Lockport received a \$9,717.99 payment from a private contractor whose unauthorized use of a city hydrant led to cross contamination of the city's water system. On May 18, Northeast Paving, a Lancaster-based lawn maintenance contractor, was filling a hydroseed tank with water, using a hydrant. The product contained seed, dye, and wood pulp, but no chemical fertilizers. According to sources, the operator failed to install a check valve –designed to prevent backflow-- between the hose leading to his truck, and the fire hydrant from which he was drawing water. Problems were first noticed at the school. Their water system actually got clogged up with this material and it prevented their water from flowing. The contents of the tank backflowed into the city water system. The water department had to immediately begin flushing the lines to contain and draw out the seed. As a result of the backflow, a two-day drinking water advisory was put into place for residents.