



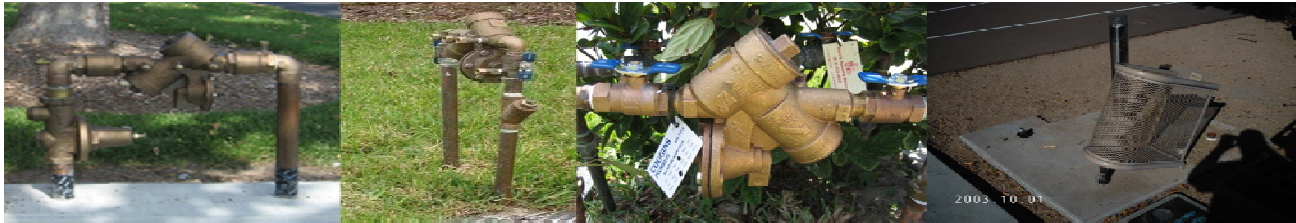
PEORIA POLICE DEPARTMENT BULLETIN



During the past year, there has been a significant increase in the number of backflow preventer valves stolen nationwide. This increase can be contributed to the scrap value of copper and brass being at all time highs. For each valve a thief steals, they can expect to pocket around \$40 to \$100. The cost to the owner to replace one of these valves is between \$1,200 and \$1,800.

What is a Backflow Preventer?

A backflow preventer is a device installed on the service water line that leads into a building or for landscape irrigation. Its purpose is to prevent water on the user's side from flowing backwards or "backflowing" into the City's water distribution system. The devices are required by City & plumbing code, and are found everywhere. They are located outside of buildings, usually in a landscaped area near a water meter box and they are often contained in small steel cages. Valves are typically the responsibility of the building or business owner.



How can I protect my Business?

The first step is to check your valve. Is it secure? Does it have a cage? Is the cage locked? Pull on the cage and make sure it is tightly secured to the ground.



- **Check the lock.** It's important to put a high quality lock on the cage. Remember, a little money now can save you a lot later. The best locks we have seen to secure these cages are "Hockey Puck" style locks.
- **Paint the valves and exposed copper** with Rust-Oleum High Performance Enamel Paint color: 7524838 - Safety Blue. This assists us in the identifying process at scrap yards and may help deter thieves from having to spend the extra time to strip off the paint.
- Post a visible warning sign mentioning security measures and the threat of prosecution.
- **Try using the recently approved A.R.I. RP-500 Plastic Backflow Preventer.** These devices range in sizes from 3/4" – 2". They are considered less valuable due to the minimal amount of brass contained on the device.



If you have any information or questions regarding these thefts please contact the Peoria Police Department at (623) 773-8311. If you would like further information about backflow prevention please contact the Public Works-Utilities Department at (623) 773-8444.