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## City takes steps to protect water supply

By [BRIAN HODGE](#)

Do you feel like terrorists are moments away from poisoning your water supply? In Millbrook the threat may seem minimal but Millbrook officials have pondered the idea recently. The Millbrook City Council recently voted unanimously to require the use of the Davidson Anti-terrorism Valve (ATV) on all new fire hydrant installations in the city. Additionally, the city purchased a small number of the devices to retrofit some high-use existing fire hydrants. The Davidson ATV is marketed through Homeland Security Products and Services, a company based in Florida.

Davidson Hydrant Technologies, Inc. recognized the need to protect the nation's water distribution system and has patented an internal check valve that is the first line of defense to either accidental backflow or intentional

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contamination of water through the hydrant.

Matt Adams, a representative from Homeland Security Products was in attendance at the city council meeting in which the council voted to require the use of the Davidson ATV.

“I would like to commend the City of Millbrook for showing the initiative to be proactive in combating this threat. The water distribution system is the most vulnerable part of municipal infrastructure, and offers those who would do us harm the ability to affect a large population in a minimal amount of time. The ATV addresses this weakness by acting as a physical barrier that prevents foreign objects; i.e., biological, radiological or chemical agents, from being introduced into our water supply at the distribution level via the hydrant. The Davidson ATV has the support of several fire departments nationwide,” said Adams.

Government security agencies – including the FBI and the White House – have acknowledged that the United States’ water distribution system is susceptible to terrorist attacks. In fact, when asked to identify serious vulnerabilities of our drinking water systems, more than 40 nationally recognized water experts identified our nation’s distribution system – and specifically referenced fire hydrants as a top vulnerability in the GAO-04-29 report. The report, given to the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works, states that “concerns were greatly amplified ... by the discovery of training manuals in Afghanistan detailing how terrorist trainees could support attacks on drinking water systems.”

Michael Harris, Utility Director for the City of Millbrook has received training on how to install the Davidson ATV. Millbrook is one of the first cities in the country to pass local legislation requiring the use of the Davidson ATV according to Adams.



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