Water Quality Division, Cross-Connection Control Program
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Instructions for Certified Backflow Prevention Assembly Testers

1 Purpose

The purpose of these instructions is to set forth the responsibilities of and requirements for backflow prevention assembly testers in the City and County of San Francisco. The instructions describe the requirements for operating in San Francisco, what forms to use, and how to communicate with the various City departments involved in the Cross-Connection Control Program. Information provided by testers is used to maintain the Cross-Connection Control Program database and assists the City in creating new accounts and updating existing accounts. It is important that testers ensure the accuracy of reports and information submitted to the program.

These instructions are organized into the following sections:

2 Certified Tester Responsibilities
3 Obtaining Backflow Tags
4 Obtaining Backflow Assembly Test Report Forms
5 New Installations
6 Removal, Replacement and Relocation of Backflow Prevention Assemblies
7 Recording or Correcting Information on Pre-Printed Forms
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2 Certified Tester Responsibilities

- Testers who operate within the City and County of San Francisco must hold a valid certification from the American Water Works Association, American Backflow Prevention Association, or Northern California Backflow Prevention Association. In addition, testers must obtain a Permit to Operate from the San Francisco Department of Public Health (SFDPH), which requires passing an exam, paying an annual license fee, and maintaining general liability insurance. It is the tester's responsibility to keep the Permit to Operate current.
- If a tester finds an assembly that has been modified or incorrectly installed, he or she must immediately report the situation to the Cross-Connection Control Program and ***not test the assembly***. All assemblies installed in San Francisco must be on the "Approved Backflow Prevention Assemblies" list developed by the University of Southern California (USC) Foundation for Cross-Connection Control and Hydraulic Research. Any modification of an assembly—such as relocation of valves, bypass arrangements, and jumper connections, whether temporary or permanent—invalidates the foundation's approval and is not permitted. Likewise, an assembly that has been installed in an orientation for which it was not designed or approved is also not permitted.

- Equipment for testing backflow prevention assemblies must be calibrated at least once a year. ***The tester must provide a copy of the certification to the SFDPH inspector when the Permit to Operate is obtained or renewed.***
- Testers must obtain backflow tags from the SFDPH and attach them to assemblies that have passed testing. (See Section 3 for how to obtain tags.) Note that if an assembly is a year or more overdue for testing (for example, the assembly was due for testing in October 2012 and it is now January 2013), then attach a tag with the prior year's date (in the example case, 2012).
- Testers must report test results on pre-printed forms obtained from the Cross-Connection Control Program. (See Section 4 for how to obtain forms.) When the program's new software comes on line in 2013, test results may also be submitted electronically.

3 Obtaining Backflow Tags

- Testers must obtain backflow tags from the SFDPH, located at 1390 Market Street, Suite 210, San Francisco. Tags may be obtained in person or by mail.
- Tags must be paid for by check (company or personal) or money order made out to the San Francisco Department of Public Health. Cash and credit cards are not accepted. All sales of tags are final; there are no refunds or exchanges.
- Tags may be purchased in person between 8 am and12 noon and 1 pm and 5 pm, Monday through Friday. Representatives purchasing tags will need the following information:
  - Letter on company letterhead that provides the certified tester information with his or her signature on the letter.
  - Copy of Annual License Certificate from the Tax Collector's Office.
  - Check or money order made payable to the San Francisco Department of Public Health.
- Tags may be purchased by mail with a request including the following information.
  - Name of the tester and company, if applicable.
  - Copy of Annual License Certificate from the Tax Collector's Office.
  - Number of tags being purchased.
  - Check or money order made payable to the San Francisco Department of Public Health.

4 Obtaining Backflow Assembly Test Report Forms

Note: When the Cross-Connection Control Program's new software comes on line in 2013, test report forms may be downloaded and test results submitted electronically.

- A preprinted "Backflow Assembly Test Report" must be used to report test results for existing backflow prevention assemblies. (For new installations, see Section 5.) This form must also be used if you remove or replace a backflow prevention assembly, rebuild or repair it, or do anything at a location where a backflow prevention assembly once existed. Using preprinted forms helps avoid duplicate serial numbers and various other problems within the Cross-Connection Control Program's database.
- Backflow Assembly Test Report forms are sent to customers along with the 30-day notices indicating that testing is due. The notices also include the customer's personal identification

code (PIC) and the service point identification (SPID) number associated with the assemblies at a given service address.

- Testers should first try to obtain the preprinted test report form(s) from the customer, for example, when meeting him or her at the location where the backflow assembly is to be tested. If a test form cannot be obtained from the customer in person, the tester must obtain the PIC number(s) from the customer. The tester can then get the test forms online at *www.cross-track.com* by entering his or her tester certification number and the customer's PIC number(s).
- If the customer cannot locate the PIC number(s), then the customer may obtain the PIC number(s) or preprinted test forms by calling (650) 652-3199 and asking to speak to a member of the Cross-Connection Control Program. To access his or her account, the customer must have the SPID number or service address, for multiple taps. Only the customer, not the tester, may obtain PIC numbers from the Cross-Connection Control Program if the 30-day notice is sent to a San Francisco address.
- If the 30-day notice is sent to an "accounts receivable" department outside of San Francisco, or a tester has a contract with an out-of-city customer to perform annual testing, the tester may call the Cross-Connection Control Program in the month that a site is due for testing to obtain a complete set of pre-printed test forms for the customer by mail or email. This exception is made so that testers can proceed with testing for out-of-city customers in a timely manner. Note, however, that Cross-Connection Control Program staff will contact the customer before releasing the forms, and therefore it is unlikely that the tester will receive the forms on the same day as they are requested.
- If a customer needs to obtain preprinted test forms at a time not associated with annual testing, for example, because a leaking assembly needs repair, he or she may call the Cross-Connection Control Program at (650) 652-3199. To access his or her account, the customer must have the SPID number or service address, for multiple taps.

5 New Installations

- New installations must be reported on "New Assembly Installation Report" forms, which can be obtained from the Cross-Connection Control Program or by download at *http://sfwater.org/backflow*. Note that this form should only be used in two cases:
  - If a backflow prevention assembly has never existed at the service address.
  - If a backflow prevention assembly exists at a site but has not been entered into the Cross-Connection Control Program's database, for example, it does not have an SFDPH tag. (If an assembly does not have a tag, inform the customer and the Cross-Connection Control Program immediately.)
- Enter the meter number, if known, on the New Assembly Installation Report. This information is important for associating the correct customer with a particular backflow prevention assembly.
- Under "Exact Assembly Location," try to be as specific as possible. Example 1: Building B, 2nd Floor, north wall utility closet labeled J2. Example 2: Basement, 25 feet east of the northeast corner, below stairwell.

6 Removal, Replacement or Relocation of Backflow Prevention Assemblies

- To remove, replace or relocate a backflow prevention assembly, you must obtain a plumbing permit from the Department of Building Inspection (DBI). Permits can be obtained from San Francisco's Central Permit Bureau, located at 1660 Mission Street, telephone number (415) 558-6070 or on line at *http://www.sfdbi.org/index.aspx?page=228*. To schedule a plumbing inspection, call Plumbing Inspection Services at (415) 558-6070. A copy of the signed permit must be submitted to the Cross-Connection Control Program within 30 days of approval.
- Report the removal or replacement of a backflow prevention assembly on the pre-printed Backflow Prevention Assembly Test Report. Cross out the information for the existing assembly, making sure that the original information is still legible. If the assembly being removed or replaced was tested, be sure to record the results of the test in the "Initial Test" area of the form. If a new assembly is installed, record its information in the area highlighted with a gray bar, titled "Replacement Information Below." Then record the test results for the new assembly in the "Final Test" area of the form.

  It is important that the information for both the old and new assemblies be reported on the same form. That way, the customer will have the correct serial number and associated backflow prevention assembly inactivated; the serial number and associated information for the new assembly will be entered into the Cross-Connection Control Program's database; and the old and new assemblies will be tied together in the database history.

7 Recording or Correcting Information on Pre-Printed Forms

- Do not deface, or alter beyond a legible state, any existing information on the test forms. If you need to correct information, cross out the incorrect information, but do not black it out or otherwise make it illegible.
- If you wish to add a contact to the account, such as a chief engineer or person to call, add it to the "Contact Name" field on the left side of the upper section of the test report or to the "Comments" field below the second section of the test report. The information will be entered into the Cross-Connection Control Program's database and will appear on the form the next time it is printed.
- If you believe that information on a pre-printed report is incorrect, such as the location or make of a backflow prevention assembly, contact the Cross-Connection Control Program to report the error. Staff will review the program's database and verify the information.
- If customer information (name, mailing address, or contact information) needs to be updated, the customer must contact San Francisco Water, Power and Sewer (SFWPS) Customer Services at (415) 351-3399 to have the changes made. Information will then be updated in the Cross-Connection Control Program's database by the following Monday morning.
- If a customer wishes to change the testing date to another month or synchronize multiple accounts, he or she can arrange this by contacting the Cross-Connection Control Program.

8 Submitting Test Reports

Note: When the Cross-Connection Control Program's new software comes on line in 2013, test reports may be submitted electronically.

- Test results must be submitted within five calendar days of the test date. Testers are responsible for submitting test reports.
- Submit only original, signed test reports by mail or high-resolution scan of the signed test reports by email. Faxed copies, mailed-in faxed copies, and reports that have been faxed at any time (whether before or after information has been entered into the form) are not acceptable.
- Reports that have been electronically altered in any way are not acceptable, except that information may be entered into the fields titled "Initial Test By," "Final Test By," "Comments," "Signature of Tester," "Date," "San Francisco Certified Tester's Number," and "Company Seal."

9 Reporting Problems Observed in the Field

- If a backflow prevention assembly fails a test, the results of the test are to be recorded in the "Initial Test" results area of the test form. The tester should then contact the customer and request authorization to repair the assembly or recommend that it be replaced. If the repair or replacement is not, or is not expected to be, completed within five days of the initial test date, then the tester must fax the test report showing the failed initial test to the SFDPH, Environmental Health at (415) 252-3894. The fax must be received within five days of the initial test date.
- If a tester finds a cross-connection hazard that is unprotected, that is, with no backflow prevention assembly or the wrong type of assembly, the tester must inform the customer of the hazard and potential health risk associated with it. The tester must also report the situation to the Cross-Connection Control Program immediately. An assembly that is the wrong type for the hazard should not be tested.
- If a tester finds a backflow assembly that has been modified or incorrectly installed (e.g., illegal by-pass, relocated shut-off valve, or wrong orientation), the assembly must be reported to the Cross-Connection Control Program immediately and ***must not be tested***.
- If a tester finds an existing backflow prevention assembly that is not tagged or is out of compliance with its test date, the tester must inform the customer of the need to test the assembly and must report the assembly to the Cross-Connection Control Program immediately.

10 Other Information

- Contacting Cross-Connection Control Program staff from the field can save you time and resources; often, questions can be answered or issues rectified on the spot. In addition, vital information that you might not otherwise know to record might be needed from the site.
- If test results for a given month are not received early enough to be entered into the Cross-Connection Control Program's database by the 6th of the following month, the database

automatically generates a "Notice of Violation," and the customer might receive this notice after having paid for testing. If this happens, testers should explain the situation to the customer. Testers and customers can call Cross-Connection Control Program staff at (650) 652-3199 to check on the compliance status of their accounts.

- It is recommended that testers maintain copies of the test reports they submit and records of inspections performed for three years.

Water Quality Division Contact Information

San Francisco Water, Power and Sewer
Water Quality Division
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Online
www.cross-track.com for pre-printed test reports
www.sfwater.org for water consumer information and Water Quality Reports

Department of Public Health Contact Information

Environmental Health
1390 Market Street, Suite 910
San Francisco, CA 94102
(415) 252-3859
(415) 252-3894 fax

Department of Building Inspection Contact Information

Central Permit Bureau
1660 Mission Street
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 558-6070
Plumbing Inspection Services (415) 558-6070
http://www.sfdbi.org/index.aspx?page=228