

Backflow Prevention Program (Cross-connection control program)

Every drinking water system in Texas is required by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to have a cross connection control program in place, otherwise known as backflow prevention. Backflow prevention is designed to protect the public water supply from contamination, by preventing backflow between a customer's plumbing system and the public water system.

Authority

State Rules

Title 30 of the Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 290 (30 TAC 290), gives public water systems the legal authority and responsibility to implement cross-connection control policies, required customer-service inspections, and require protection using approved backflow-prevention assemblies. TCEQ rules place the primary responsibility on the PWS (Public Water Supply) for recognizing and evaluating hazards within its distribution system. Once a hazard is identified, the PWS must ensure that the PWS is protected from contamination by that hazard. The PWS may terminate water service anywhere an unprotected health hazard is found and should restore service only when the health hazard no longer exists or after it has been properly isolated from the PWS.

Plumbing Codes

The Plumbing License Law (Title 8, Texas Occupation Code, Chapter 1301) requires all municipalities with a population of 5,000 or greater to adopt a plumbing code. City ordinance: Section 22-280, Cross-connection control program. (Ord. No.2009-13, § 2, 3-24-2009)

Backflow Testing Program

Guidelines

The City of League City has established a Backflow Testing Program to help assure the backflow prevention devices protecting the City water system from potential health hazards are tested annually. The program requires that property owners are responsible for maintaining backflow prevention device in good working order and providing annual test reports as proof of compliance.

Customers

The program requires that property owners are responsible for maintaining backflow prevention device in good working order and providing annual test reports as proof of compliance. Backflow prevention devices are required on residential properties with irrigation systems and ALL commercial and industrial businesses.

Responsibility

Backflow testing is the backflow owner's responsibility and is paid by the owner. Owners may choose testers or testing companies to perform annual backflow testing that meet the following requirements:

- The tester utilized by the customer must have a current license from the TCEQ, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.
- The pressure gauge used by the tester must be within the expiration period for annual calibration.
- Backflow devices on firelines must be tested by a state (TCEQ) licensed backflow tester employed by a fireline testing company. Please note, many fireline testing companies will also test backflows or irrigation and domestic water lines.

It is a requirement that EVERY backflow device be inspected annually by a certified backflow tester. The results of the inspection must be submitted to BSI. Backflow prevention inspectors will submit inspections results to BSI as a part of their service. If the device fails inspection, the party responsible for

the location of the backflow device and the City will be notified. Immediate repair or replacement will be required. The city will initiate work order to turn off the water until the backflow assembly is in compliance.

Testing Cost

A list of registered testing companies is listed on the website. Their prices range from \$69 to \$175 per backflow test. All future reminders will note the past testing company. Each testing company must register with the city at a cost of \$75 annually to ensure their TCEQ license is current and their testing equipment is in accordance with current TCEQ regulations.

Designated Backflow Representative

The City of League City has contracted with Backflow Solutions Inc. (BSI) to manage a backflow inspection program. BSI has experience managing such programs for other municipalities across the country and has an outstanding record for customer service. BSI will serve as the primary point of contact for backflow inspections within the City of League City and can be contacted at 1-800-414-4990 or through their website at <http://www.backflowsolutions.com>. The City of League City will continue to manage enforcement for non-compliant backflow devices.

City's Cost

The annual subscription fee to BSI is \$495. With this, BSI maintains the online database to insure a functional backflow assembly tracking system that is easy to understand and use by licensed testers. As well as, maintaining an internet website where testers shall input all data related to backflow tests they conduct within the city. The website and all subsequent information will be stored safely and securely. All information contained within BSI Online will remain the property of the city.

In addition, water customers will be sent two (2) notices advising their assembly is due to for testing.

- “Test Due Notice” – shall be mailed approximately (30) days prior to the scheduled test date. It will include the identity of the water customer’s last tester with all relevant information, as well as an email a tester reminder to the water customer’s last tester.
- “Overdue Notice” (2nd notice) – shall be sent after the “Test Date” has passed if backflow test results have not been entered to the online database. This notice will advise the water customer of its delinquent test status.
- BSI will email a copy of each test report to the city, in order to maintain compliance with the TCEQ.

Complying with these requirements

An initial letter from the city will be mailed to commercial and industrial accounts. These accounts will be billed \$35 a one-time registration fee per each separate device through the water bill. Customers with known devices will receive notification and reminder directly from BSI that testing is due. Once the annual inspection is complete, the registered testing company will enter that information directly into BSI’s online reporting system. The data entry charge shall be paid by the tester, \$12.95 for each test, and prior to uploading the test data to the BSI database.

The city water service to any premises may be discontinued and assessed a processing fee of \$40 in accordance with the ordinance for discontinuance of service to a city customer if a backflow prevention assembly is not installed, tested, or maintained as required by ordinance; or if it is found that a backflow prevention assembly has been removed, bypassed, or if an unprotected cross-connection or other structural or health hazards, including violations of the ordinance exist.