

CITY OF LAKE CHARLES WATER DIVISION BACKFLOW PREVENTION AND CROSS CONNECTION CONTROL POLICY

The City of Lake Charles has an obligation to provide safe, clean drinking water to our city and take every precaution to prevent contaminants from entering the water system. To ensure this, all new commercial and residential services which meet the requirements of this policy must have an approved backflow prevention assembly installed at the service connection to the public water supply or immediately downstream of the service connection.

The type of backflow assembly will be commensurate with the degree of hazard and all backflow prevention devices shall meet the requirements of all applicable state and local codes, policies and/or ordinances for water service including the International Plumbing Code.

A. PURPOSE

Each existing or new structure is required to implement and maintain an adequate method for backflow prevention as mandated under existing state regulations, and this ordinance.

The purpose of this backflow prevention and cross-connection control policy is as follows:

1. Provide protection for the City's water supply from the possibility of contamination, by isolating such contaminants or pollutants which could backflow or back-siphon into the potable public water supply.
2. Provide for the elimination or control of existing cross-connections, actual or potential, between the potable water supply and non potable systems and sources.
3. Provide an ongoing and continuing program of cross-connection control and backflow prevention for the City of Lake Charles.
4. Provide for annual testing and maintenance of cross-connection and backflow prevention assemblies.

B. APPLICABILITY OF THIS POLICY

1. All residential or commercial water services 1.5 inches or greater in size, shall be required to have a **testable** backflow prevention device installed downstream of the metered service.
2. Any residential or commercial fire service of any size, shall be required to have a **testable** backflow prevention device installed downstream of the fire service tap, or meter.

C. The following definitions shall apply only to this policy. For those terms not defined in this policy, the definitions contained in the International Plumbing Code, most current edition, shall apply.

1. **BACKFLOW** – the flow of water or other liquids, mixtures, or substances into the distribution pipes of a potable water supply from any source other than its intended source.
2. **BACKFLOW PREVENTER** – a device to prevent backflow. The device should be identified by the conditions which it is designed to prevent.
3. **BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY GENERAL TESTER** – those individuals holding a testing certificate from a nationally recognized backflow certification organization approved by the State Health Officer. Such individuals are not required to be a licensed plumber and are authorized to perform tests of backflow prevention devices and methods. When such devices or methods are located on private property, a backflow prevention assembly general tester is not authorized to install, repair, or maintain such devices or methods. A general tester may perform installation, maintenance or repairs, if the backflow prevention device is on public property, after having obtained approval from the water purveyor.
4. **BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY TECHNICIAN** – a water supply protection specialist licensed by the State Plumbing Board of Louisiana pursuant to LA. R.S. 37:1361, *et seq.*, and its implementing regulations (LAC 46:LV.101, *et seq.*). All water supply protection specialists are Louisiana licensed plumbers who hold such a special endorsement on their plumbing license. Such individuals are authorized to test, install, repair, and maintain backflow prevention devices and methods.

5. **BY-PASS** – any system of piping or other arrangement whereby the water may be diverted around any part or portion of a water supply or treatment facility including, but not limited to, around an installed backflow preventer.
6. **CONTAMINATION** – the introduction into water of microorganisms, chemicals, toxic substances, wastes or wastewater that makes the water unfit for its intended use.
7. **CROSS CONNECTION** – any connection or arrangement by means of which contaminants of any kind can be caused to enter the potable water supply.
8. **CUSTOMER** - the owner, operator, or occupant of a building or property which has a water service from a public water system, or the owner or operator of a private water system which has a water service from a public water system.
9. **CUSTOMER SERVICE** – the water piping downstream of the water meter, or downstream of a certain point on an unmetered line, which continues up to the building or structure being served. Generally considered to be the customer’s responsibility.
10. **DEGREE OF HAZARD** – the term is derived from an evaluation of the potential risk to public health and the adverse effect of the hazard upon the potable water.
11. **POTABLE WATER** – water having bacteriological, physical, radiological, and chemical qualities that make it safe and suitable for human drinking, cooking, and washing uses.
12. **POTABLE WATER SUPPLY** – a publicly owned or privately owned water supply system which sells or supplies potable water.
13. **UTILITY WATER SERVICE PIPE (or SERVICE CONNECTION)** – the pipe from the water main , water supply system, or other approved source of water supply up to and including the water meter, or beginning point of an un-metered customer supply line. Generally considered to be the water suppliers’ responsibility.
14. **WATER SERVICE** - Depending on the context, “water service” means the physical connection between a public water system and a customer's building, property, or private water system, or the act of providing potable water to a customer.

15. **WATER SUPPLIER** – a person who owns or operates a water supply system including, but not limited to, a person who owns or operates a public water system.
16. **WATER SUPPLY SYSTEM** – the system of pipes, or other constructed conveyances, structures, and facilities through which water is obtained, treated to make potable (if necessary) and then distributed (with or without charge) for human drinking, cooking, washing, or other use.

D. TYPES OF BACKFLOW PREVENTION REQUIRED

1. As required by this policy, the Customer shall install the proper type of backflow prevention device before any water service is turned on for customer use.
2. All backflow prevention devices shall meet the requirements of all applicable state and local codes or ordinances for water service including, but not limited to, the International Plumbing Code and the Louisiana State Sanitary Code.
3. All installation, maintenance, and testing of those backflow prevention devices prescribed by this ordinance, shall be performed by a Backflow Prevention Assembly General Tester, or a Backflow Prevention Assembly Technician.

E. RESPONSIBILITIES OF WATER SYSTEM AND CUSTOMER

1. **Water System**
 - a. The Water Supplier shall be responsible to insure the protection of the water supply system from potential contamination through containment practices and policies as set forth herein.
 - b. City of Lake Charles inspectors or their designated representatives have the authority to inspect backflow preventors governed by this ordinance. If the City of Lake Charles or its designee determines at any time that a serious threat to the public health exists, the customer shall immediately remedy the hazard, or the water service may be terminated immediately.
2. **Customer**

- a. The Customer shall install and maintain backflow prevention methods or devices as prescribed by City ordinance, and as directed by City plumbing officials and *this written policy*, within that part of the water system owned and maintained by the Customer. This includes the piping downstream of the water meter or downstream of any unmetered connection
- b. In the event of a backflow incident, the Customer shall immediately notify the City of Lake Charles of the incident and take steps to confine the contamination or pollution. Water service will not be restored until corrective action is taken and approved after inspection by the City of Lake Charles or its designee.
- c. The Customer shall inform the City of Lake Charles or its designee of any proposed or modified cross-connection and also any existing cross-connection of which the Customer is aware but has not been found by the City of Lake Charles or its designee.
- d. The Customer is responsible for the annual maintenance and testing of any required backflow prevention device which is required under this policy. All records of annual testing shall be provided to the City of Lake Charles or its designee, and shall be kept by the owner of the backflow prevention device for at least five (5) years.
- e. The Customer shall be solely responsible for any costs associated with testing, repairs, overhauls, or replacement of any backflow prevention device required under this ordinance.

F. TESTING AND MAINTENANCE OF BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLIES

1. All backflow prevention assemblies installed as required by this ordinance shall be field tested:
 - a. upon installation
 - b. at least annually to ensure that they provide continuing backflow protection
 - c. when the assembly is cleaned, repaired, or overhauled

- d. when the assembly is relocated
- e. The City of Lake Charles may require backflow prevention assemblies or methods to be tested at any time in addition to the annual testing requirement.
- f. Any backflow prevention device failing to operate as intended, shall be repaired or replaced by the Customer within 90 days of the failed test. Upon repair or replacement, a new test shall be required and results furnished to the City of Lake Charles or their designee within ten (10) days after testing is completed. All repair or replacement costs shall be the responsibility of the owner.

G. TESTING AND MAINTENANCE TIMEFRAMES

1. The annual testing and reporting period for backflow prevention devices covered under this ordinance shall run from January 1st of each year to December 31st of each year.
2. For those owners who have not yet performed required testing, or have not provided documentation of the required testing for existing devices, their first reporting period shall be January 1, 2018 to December 31, 2018. This shall provide adequate time for the City of Lake Charles to provide information about the program and its' requirements.
3. By December 31, 2017, initial letters of information about the requirements for annual testing will be sent out to all customers who are covered under this ordinance. These letters shall also request documentation about the most recent testing performed on required backflow devices, as well as a survey requesting information on existing devices.
4. Beginning July 1, 2018, and on that date each year, a reminder letter shall be sent to those customers who have not yet provided documentation of backflow preventor testing to the City. It will state that backflow preventor testing should be performed, and documentation of that testing provided to the City by December 31st. This letter shall also provide any penalties and fines which may be levied if the testing is not performed as required. There will be no other correspondence.

5. If no test results are received by December 31st of each reporting year, the following will take place.
 - a. A \$ 200.00 penalty fee shall be assessed and added to the customers' water bill.
 - b. The City of Lake Charles shall contract with a certified tester to have the backflow prevention device tested. The cost of that test, plus a \$ 50.00 administrative fee shall be added to the customers' water bill. Results from the testing will be mailed to the customer for their records.
 - c. If fees and charges are not paid on time, and in full, the water service to the customer may be disconnected for non pay.
 - d. The City of Lake Charles reserves the right to make all decisions concerning payment of charges due.

H. OTHER PROVISIONS

1. The water service may be discontinued in the case of non-compliance. Non-compliance includes, but is not limited to, the following:
 - a. Refusal to allow the City of Lake Charles or its designee access to the property to inspect for cross-connection;
 - b. Removal of a backflow prevention assembly or method which has been required by the City of Lake Charles or its designee.
 - c. Bypassing of a backflow prevention assembly or method which has been required by the City of Lake Charles or its designee.
 - d. Providing inadequate backflow prevention when potential or actual cross connections exist.
 - e. Failure to install a backflow prevention assembly or method which has been required by the City of Lake Charles or its designee.

- f. Failure to test and/or properly repair a backflow prevention assembly or method as required by the City of Lake Charles or its designee.
- g. Failure to comply with the requirements of this *ordinanc*