



ESTABLISHING A CROSS CONNECTION CONTROL PROGRAM

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I have been getting a lot of inquiries lately about Cross Connection Control and how to establish a successful program.

The following article includes some basic information and tips on how to implement a Cross Connection Control Program in your community. The regulation as it appears in the New York State Department of Health Chapter I of the State Sanitary Code Part 5 – Drinking Water Supplies - Subpart 5.1 - Public Water Systems:

5-1.31 CROSS CONNECTION CONTROL

a. The supplier of water shall protect the public water system by containing potential contamination within the premises of the user in the following manner:

- 1. by requiring an approved air gap, reduced pressure zone device, double check valve assembly or equivalent protective device consistent with the degree of hazard posed by any service connection;*
- 2. by requiring the user of such connections to submit plans for the installation of protective devices to the supplier of water and/or the State for approval; and*
- 3. by assuring that all protective devices be tested at least annually. Records of such tests shall be made available to and maintained by the supplier of water. Such tests shall be conducted by certified backflow prevention device testers pursuant to the following requirements:*
 - i. a "general tester" certification will be issued when the applicant presents proof of satisfactory completion of a training course for testers of backflow prevention devices which has been approved by the department.*
 - ii. a "limited tester" certification will be issued when the applicant presents proof of employment by a manufacturer as its agent for the servicing, maintaining and testing of backflow prevention devices.*
 - iii. the department has the authority to require any person applying for certification or renewal of certification as a certified tester of backflow prevention devices to take a written, oral or practical examination, if it deems such examinations to be reasonably necessary in determining the applicants qualifications. The results of such examinations may be the sole basis for approval or disapproval of an application for certification or renewal of certification.*
 - iv. at least three months before the expiration date of a current certificate, both the general tester and a limited tester must submit proof that they are still engaged in the activity represented by their current certification.*
 - v. a certification will be suspended or revoked, on due notice and an opportunity for a hearing thereon, for any of*

the following reasons: submission of false test reports for backflow prevention devices; proof that the person is no longer engaged in servicing, maintaining and testing backflow prevention devices; or failure to apply for recertification.

b. The supplier of water should not allow a user to establish a separate source of water. However, if the user justifies the need for a separate source of water, the supplier of water shall protect the public water system for a user who has a separate source of water and does not pose a hazard as detailed in subdivision (a) of this section in the following manner:

- 1. by requiring the user to regularly examine the separate water source as to its quality;*
- 2. by approving the use of only those separate water sources which are properly developed, constructed, protected and found to meet the requirements of sections 5-1.51 and 5-1.52 of this Subpart; and*
- 3. by filing such approvals with the State annually.*

c. All users of a public water system shall prevent cross-connections between the potable water piping system and any other piping system within the premises.

d. Any installation, service, maintenance, testing, repair or modification of a backflow prevention device shall be performed in accordance with the provisions of any county, city, town or village having a plumbing code. For this section, a backflow prevention device is an approved air gap, reduced pressure zone device, double check valve assembly or equivalent protective device designed to prevent or contain potential contamination of a public water system. All individuals who perform testing of backflow prevention devices shall be certified, in accordance with subdivision 5-1.31 (a) (3) of this section.

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The first step in establishing a Cross Connection Control Program for your community is to verify that there is clear language in your local water law / ordinance expressly forbidding the existence of cross connections. Simply put, "There shall be no cross connections allowed". After you have verified that clear language exists regarding cross connections, it would also be a good time to clarify with the village, town, or water board that the responsibility of enforcing the law and determining the degree of threat rests with the Water Operator of Record.

The water operator in most cases oversees new installations of water services and water meters and also inspects repairs and replacement of services and meters. By virtue of these responsibilities, the operator can easily determine the degree of threat and which device is appropriate for the protection of >>>

the water supply.

Now that you have a regulation and determined the individual whose responsibility it is to implement and enforce the Cross Connection Control Program, it would be a good idea to educate your customers on the dangers of cross connections and their responsibilities, if and when it is determined that a device needs to be installed on their premises. These responsibilities would include required maintenance and the cost of annual testing. Informative flyers could be included with water bills or posted with the Annual Water Quality Report.

A good Cross Connection Control Program may also include notifications that a required test is impending or that a successful test report has been submitted. The person in charge of enforcement should also keep a current list of certified backflow device testers on hand so that customers that are required to test their devices annually can be sure to be able to contact a qualified tester.

In summary:

- Know the regulation (Part 5 – subpart 5-1.31)
- Implement specific language in your local water law
- Determine who is responsible for implementation (Water

Operator)

- Educate the public
- Keep good records of pending and completed test results

Remember by implementing a successful Cross Connection Control Program you can insure your ability to provide **“Quality on Tap”!** 💧💧💧
