Cross-Connection Control & Backflow Prevention
Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What is Cross-Connection Control?**
   Cross-Connection Control is a program designed to take the safeguards necessary to protect the actual or potential physical connection between the public drinking water system and a potential source of contaminated water or other liquid.

2. **What is backflow?**
   When conditions within the City's water distribution system deviate from the "normal" conditions, water flow can be reversed. This is called **backflow** and can contaminate the City's water distribution system.

3. **What does the City of Tallahassee Cross-Connection Control (CCC) Program do?**

   The City of Tallahassee's Cross-Connection Control program is required by the State and Federal Government to protect drinking water systems from potential contamination or pollution. The CCC office is committed to providing customers with high quality, clean drinking water free of contaminants. CCC staff implements the City's ordinance, which outlines the requirements for backflow prevention assemblies, installation, testing, maintenance and repairs.

4. **What is a backflow prevention assembly**

   A backflow prevention assembly is a device, which is installed in a water line and prevents water or other substances from flowing backward into the water supply system. As backflow prevention assemblies are mechanical, they contain springs, moving parts, and rubber seating surfaces, all of which wear over time. Backflow prevention assemblies must be properly tested and maintained in order to ensure that they are functioning properly to keep the water supply safe.

5. **What causes backflow?**
   Backflow is possible in two situations: backsiphonage and backpressure. **Backsiphonage** occurs when there is a sudden reduction in the water pressure in the distribution system, such as hydrant usage during firefighting or when a water main breaks. This can create a suction effect, drawing the non-potable substance into the drinking water system. **Backpressure** is created when pressure in a non-potable system, such as in a recirculating system containing soap, acid, or antifreeze, exceeds that in the potable system that provides make up water to the system. This can force the potable water to reverse its direction of flow through the cross connection. Non-potable substances can then enter the potable water system.

6. **How can backflow be prevented?**
   The City of Tallahassee recognizes four methods of backflow prevention: Air Gap, Double Check Valve Assembly, Reduced Pressure Principal Assembly and Pressure Vacuum Breaker Assembly. The type of device needed is based on the degree of hazard that the property represents to the potable water supply.

7. **Why is it important to complete and return the questionnaire form sent to residential customers with backflow prevention assemblies?**
   In addition to helping update records, the questionnaire provides the CCC Office with important information to determine if your backflow assembly qualifies under the new rules and regulations to be **tested every two years rather than annually**.
   If our office does not receive the completed **q**uestionnaire form, your backflow will remain on annual testing requirements.

8. **How do I qualify for a biennial testing (once every two years) as a residential customer with a backflow prevention assembly?**
   You can qualify if your service connection is two inches or less in diameter and supplies water to a building or premise containing only dwelling units and the dwelling units or building meet the following conditions:
   A. The dwelling, or building within which the dwelling is located, is fewer than five stories in height
   B. There is no booster pump in the dwelling or building
   C. There is no alternate water source on the property
   D. There is no other potential hazard listed on Appendix A

9. **What is the frequency of testing for residential backflow assemblies?**
   Testing must take place under the following conditions:
   - At the time of installation, but no later than 10 calendar days after installation of a new backflow prevention assembly;
   - Immediately after the repair, replacement, or relocation of the assembly;
   - Every two years (biennially) from date of installation if you qualify. To find out if you qualify, you must complete and return a questionnaire form to the office of Cross Connection Control Questionnaire form Link or
   - Annually from the date of installation if your backflow does not qualify to be tested every two years.

10. What is the frequency of testing for non-residential backflow assemblies?
Testing must take place under the following conditions:

- At the time of installation, but no later than 10 calendar days after installation of a new backflow;
- Immediately after the repair, replacement, or relocation of the assembly;
- Annually from the date of installation;
- At the request and discretion of the City's Authorized Agent

Opt-In Testing Program for Residential customers

11. What is the Residential Opt-In Testing Program?
It is a new service offered by the City of Tallahassee to residential customers with backflow prevention assemblies. Under this program, a residential water service customer can authorize the City's contractor to test the backflow prevention assembly on the customer's behalf. If a residential water service customer elects to "opt-in", a fee for testing the backflow assembly shall be charged to the customer's monthly utility bill. The fee shall be $3.00 per month if testing is required biennially (every two years) and $6.00 per month if testing is required annually. The water service customer will remain registered in the program until written cancellation is received from the customer. However the customer will continue to be charged a monthly fee until payment for the prior testing has been paid in full.

The City's "Opt-In" Program is only for testing. Any maintenance or service needs identified through testing remain the responsibility of the water service customer. The City's contractor will notify the customer of any required repairs that were determined during the backflow assembly test.

This new service is designed to help streamline the testing process. Participation in this program is optional. If you prefer to directly retain your own testing technician or contractor, you may do so as long as you remain compliant with the City's biennial testing requirements.

If you would like to register for this program, complete an "Opt-In" request form and submit it to the Cross-Connection Control office.

Complete the online submission form here
Download a fillable PDF version here. Print, scan and email the completed form to ccc@talgov.com or mail it to: Cross-Connection Control 4505-A Springhill Road, Tallahassee FL 32305

12. Who should test backflow prevention assemblies?
The City of Tallahassee Cross Connection Control office only recognizes individual testing performed by individuals who have been certified by an approved testing school. List of Certified Backflow Testers.

By the State of Florida Construction Industry Licensing Board declaratory statement on January 10, 2014, contractors with a testing license can only repair**,** install, or replace backflow prevention assemblies.

13. Who should repair, or install backflows prevention assemblies?

The installation, replacement and repair of backflow preventers on your property must be completed by a licensed plumbing contractor. Additionally, the installation, replacement or repair of backflow preventers within the City or unincorporated areas of Leon County, require permits and inspections. Please call the City Building inspections Division at (850) 891-7125 or the Leon County Building Plans Review and Inspections at (850) 606-1300 if you have any questions regarding permit requirements associated with backflow prevention assemblies.

14. Under what conditions would water service be disconnected or suspended?

Water service may be interrupted if any of the followings exist:

A. When a backflow hazard or uncontrolled cross-connection, either actual or potential, has been identified within a customer's water system and is judged to be a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of any person, public potable water supply system or to the environment.
B. Where a backflow prevention assembly is required to be installed to eliminate a backflow hazard or uncontrolled Cross-Connection, either actual or potential, and the customer failed to comply with the City's notification that allowed 30 days to install and comply with the CCC Rules and Regulations.
C. Where a backflow prevention assembly exists, but the assembly has not been properly tested per the frequency of testing and after the customer received two notifications that allowed 44 days to comply with the CCC Rules and Regulations.
D. Failure to repair the backflow prevention assembly in the time allowed by the notification and after the customer has been notified by the tester that the backflow failed the test.

15. Can backflow assemblies be removed?

Prior to the removal of any backflow by the homeowner or a licensed plumber only, the office of Cross Connection shall be contacted for approval and inspections. Backflow assemblies can be removed only when the Cross-Connection, actual or potential has been eliminated.

Failure to obtain approval and inspection prior to the removal of backflow assemblies may result in the City's discontinuation of water service

16. Where can I get more information about Cross-Connection Control program?

Please call us at (850) 891-1248 if you have any questions about Cross-Connection or backflow testing, or email us at ccc@talgov.com

Appendix A – Typical Hazards referenced in question # 8

There are varying degrees of hazards, and the degree of protection should be commensurate with the degree of hazard. The following sections provide partial list of facilities and equipment that require protection against cross-connections. These facilities and equipment shall be served by an approved backflow prevention assembly of the type(s) designated below. Facilities and equipment not specifically identified within this section may require Cross-Connection control and shall be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the City's Authorized Agent.

DC	Double Check Valve Backflow Prevention Assembly
DCDA	Double Check Detector Backflow Prevention Assembly
RP	Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Prevention Assembly
RPDA	Reduced Pressure Principle Detector Backflow Prevention Assembly
PVB	Pressure Vacuum Breaker Assembly

A.1 Typical Facilities Requiring Protection

The following facilities shall require an approved backflow prevention assembly as indicated in the table below. The table lists the assemblies that provide the minimum level of protection required. The customer may elect to install an assembly that will provide a greater level of protection, but the assembly shall be subject to City approval. The assembly shall be installed prior to any water connection serving the site and shall be located within five feet of the meter or service connection to the public potable drinking water supply.

	Facility Type	Required Assembly
1.	Aircraft and Missile Plants	RP
2.	Automotive Plants	RP
3.	Auxiliary Water Supply (Interconnected; Commercial or Residential)	RP
4.	Auxiliary Water Supply (Not Interconnected; Commercial)	RP
5.	Auxiliary Water Supply (Not Interconnected; Residential)	RP
6.	Beverage Bottling Plants	DC
7.	Breweries	RP
8.	Buildings with Sewer Ejectors	RP
9.	Canneries, Packing Houses and Reduction Plants	RP
10.	Car Wash and Water Reclamation Systems	RP
11.	Centralized Heating and Air Conditioning Plants	RP
12.	Chemical Plants	RP
13.	Commercial Laundries	RP
14.	Commercial Swimming Pools	RP
15.	Dairies and Cold Storage Plants	RP
16.	Dye Works	RP
17.	Food Processing or Preparation Facilities	RP
18.	Film Processing Laboratories	RP

19.	Fire Systems (residential 13D) less than 2-1/2”	DC

20.	Fire Systems with Stand Pipe Systems	DCDA
21.	Fire Systems with Sprinkler Systems	DCDA
22.	Fire Systems with Pump and/or Storage Tank	DCDA
23.	Fire Systems with Auxiliary Supply	RPDA
24.	Fire System with Chemicals Additives	RPDA
25.	Schools, High Schools, and Colleges	RP
26.	Hospital, Mortuaries, Medical and Dental Buildings and Sanitariums	RP
27.	Laundries and Dye works	RP
28.	Irrigation Systems (with pop-up sprinkler heads, injector pumps, or alt. water source)	RP
29.	Irrigation Systems (without pop-up sprinkler heads, injector pumps, or alt. water source)	RP
30.	Laboratories	RP
31.	Manufacturing, Processing or Fabricating Plants	RP
32.	Mop Sinks	RP
33.	Motion Picture Studios	RP
34.	Multistoried Buildings (with booster pumps or internal reservoir)	RP
35.	Multistoried Buildings (with boiler systems or cooling towers)	RP
36.	Multistoried Buildings (non-health hazard)	DC
37.	Oil and Gas Production Plants	RP
38.	Paper and Paper Products Facilities	RP
39.	Plating Plants	RP
40.	Radioactive Materials Processing Facilities	RP
41.	Restaurants, Kitchens, Food Processing Facilities	RP
42.	Restricted, Classified or other Closed Facilities	RP
43.	Rubber Plants	RP
44.	Sand and Gravel Plants	RP
45.	Served by Reuse or Reclaimed Water	RP
46.	Solar Domestic Hot-Water Systems with Direct Make-Up Lines	RP
47.	Steam Boiler Plants	RP
48.	Sewage and Storm Drainage Facilities (Including lift stations)	RP
49.	Water-Hauling Equipment	RP
50.	Where Cross-Connection is Maintained	RP

A.2 Other Equipment Requiring Protection

The presence of specific equipment on a site may also require the installation of an approved backflow prevention assembly. The type of assembly required shall be determined by the City of Tallahassee’s Authorized Agent and shall be commensurate with the degree of hazard. If required, the assembly shall be installed prior to any water connection serving the site and shall be located within five feet of the meter or service connection to the public

potable drinking water supply. The presence of an equipment-specific backflow prevention assembly may not necessarily relieve the need for (or requirement of) a site-specific backflow prevention assembly on the water service connection in order to protect the public potable water supply system.