



Backflow Prevention Policy

Department of Utilities
December 2022

Introduction

The Department of Utilities is required by LAC 51: XII.344.B to develop and implement this backflow prevention plan to outline policies and procedures that will be used to verify that customers comply with mandatory containment practices. This plan also outlines some of the requirements of the Louisiana State Uniform Construction Code (LSUCC) and the 2015 International Plumbing Code, which is the current version adopted and amended by the State of Louisiana. For a full list of requirements please refer to the LSUCC and 2015 International Plumbing Code, all requirements listed must be met to be in compliance with the St. Tammany Parish Department of Utilities.

Purpose

The purpose of a backflow prevention device is to protect the public drinking water system from back siphonage or back pressure. Back siphonage can be caused in the event that the water system drops pressure and creates a suction on the customer's line, such as when a water main breaks or during firefighting. Back pressure is when the pressure on the customer's side is greater than the pressure in the water system due to equipment or devices on the customers side.

Responsibilities

Responsibility of the Owner: The Louisiana State Uniform Construction Code (LSUCC) and the 2015 International Plumbing Code state that the customer who operates one of the categories of facilities listed in their code, requiring a backflow prevention device, is responsible for installing and annually inspecting the device. In addition to the customers listed in the LSUCC and 2015 International Plumbing code, the Department of Utilities requires all commercial customers to have a backflow prevention device and to have it inspected annually by a state licensed inspector. Devices shall be installed before new water service may be turned on. All installs, tests, repairs, overhauls, or replacements shall be at the expense of the customer/owner of the backflow preventer. Failure to comply with these requirements could result in the disconnection of water service and all fees associated with it. The backflow device shall be installed between the water meter and the building.

Responsibility of the Public Water System: The Department of Utilities will be responsible for protecting the Parish owned public water systems by developing, implementing, and enforcing the backflow prevention plan. The Department of Utilities will also make a reasonable effort to ensure that only customers who comply with the mandatory containment practices connect or remain connected to any of the Department of Utilities water systems.

Certification and Inspection Requirements

Backflow prevention devices may be installed, repaired, and maintained by anyone who meets the requirements of LAC 51: XII.346.A.

Backflow prevention devices may be tested and inspected by anyone who meets the requirements of LAC 51: XII.346.B.

§346. Installer, Repairer, Tester and Maintainer Qualifications for Backflow Prevention Devices and Methods

A. Installer/Repairer/Maintainer Qualifications. Backflow preventers shall be installed, repaired and/or maintained by a state Plumbing Board of Louisiana (SPBLA) -licensed plumber who holds an SPBLA water supply protection specialist endorsement on his/her plumbing license pursuant to R.S. 37:1361 et seq., and its implementing regulations (LAC 46:LV.101 et seq.). Backflow preventers associated with a landscape irrigation system may be installed, repaired and/or maintained by a Horticulture Commission of Louisiana-licensed landscape irrigation contractor who holds an SPBLA-issued special water supply protection specialist endorsement in accordance with R.S. 3:3808(P). Backflow preventers located on public property or otherwise under the complete control of the water supplier (for example, water meter and the piping upstream of the water meter, if provided), may be installed, repaired and/or maintained by a backflow prevention assembly repairer who meets the ASSE 5130- 2009 (backflow prevention assembly repairer professional qualification standard) or other individuals holding a backflow prevention assembly repairer certificate from a nationally recognized backflow certification organization approved by the state health officer.

B. Field Tester Qualifications. Backflow preventers shall be tested by a state Plumbing Board of Louisiana (SPBLA) -licensed plumber who holds an SPBLA water supply protection specialist endorsement on his/her plumbing license pursuant to R.S. 37:1361 et seq., and its implementing regulations (LAC 46:LV.101 et seq.); or, by a backflow prevention assembly tester who meets ASSE 5110-2009 (backflow prevention assembly tester professional qualification standard), or other individuals holding a testing certificate from a nationally recognized backflow certification organization approved by the state health officer. Backflow preventers associated with a landscape irrigation system may be tested by a Horticulture Commission of Louisiana-licensed landscape irrigation contractor who holds an SPBLA-issued special water supply protection specialist endorsement in accordance with R.S. 3:3808(P). AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 40:4(A)(8) and R.S. 40:5(A)(2)(3)(5)(6)(17)(20). HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health, Office of Public Health, LR 42:1095 (July 2016)

A list of licensed plumbers in the State of Louisiana can be found on the State Plumbing Board of Louisiana website, only licensed plumbers with a Water Supply Protection Specialist (WSPS) endorsement are certified to install, repair, and test backflow prevention devices.

Inspections shall be conducted at least once a year with the test results submitted to the water supplier within ten days of the inspection, any defective backflow preventer shall be repaired and retested within thirty days. It is the owners / customers responsibility to have the tests and inspections performed and reported within the required time frame.

The owner is required to notify the Plumbing Official and/or water supplier in advance when the tests are to be undertaken so that the Plumbing Official and/or water supplier may witness the tests if so desired. All tests, repairs, overhauls or replacements shall be at the expense of the owner of the backflow preventer (2015 International Plumbing Code 312.10.3).

Records of any maintenance, repairs, overhauls, tests, and replacements shall be kept by the owner of the backflow device for at least five years. Records shall be made available to the Plumbing Official, water supplier, and /or the State Health Officer upon request.

Failure to comply with any of the inspection requirements could result in water service being disconnected and all fees associated with it.

Containment Practices

Reduced Pressure Zone valves will be used for all containment practices other than portable tanks/ trailers which will be required to have an Air Gap in place. The distance of the Air Gap shall be not less than the distance equal to two times the pipe diameter or 2 inches, whichever is greater.

References

LAC 51: XII.343-346

2015 International Plumbing Code

Louisiana State Uniform Construction Code