

## **Northern California Backflow Prevention Association Cross-Connection Control Specialist Certification General Guidelines**



The Cross-Connection Control Specialist certification program has been established to ensure that those seeking certification as a Cross-Connection Control Specialist have demonstrated their competency to satisfaction of Northern California Backflow Prevention Association (NCBPA), State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), and all drinking water jurisdictions, and would be allowed to administer an approved cross-connection control program to meet the regulatory requirements. Each certified Specialist may need to consult with the water jurisdiction for any additional requirements.

For any questions or need further information regarding this certification program, please feel free to contact NCBPA at **(707) 731-4239** or via email at [custservice@norcalbpa.org](mailto:custservice@norcalbpa.org).

### **Definitions:**

**Board of Directors** – The current elected body from members.

**Cross-connection** – An unprotected actual or potential connection between a potable water system (water that is safe for drinking) and any source or system containing water or other substance that is not safe, wholesome and fit for human consumption.

**Northern California Backflow Prevention Association (NCBPA)** – The organization (list additional information here)

**Need to Know Criteria** – A set of criteria approved by the NCBPA Board of Directors that establishes the basic knowledge for the examinations.

**Certification Administrator** – A person appointed by the Board of Directors to administer the examination process.

**State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), formerly administered by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH)** – The administrative authority for the applicable state law relating to cross-connection control.

**Contact Hour** - A minimum 50 minutes of actual time an attendee participates in continuing education offered by an approved provider, on a public water supply related topic.

**Continuing Education Course** – A training session given by an accepted provider that provides information related to water system operations, including treatment plants, distribution systems, water quality maintenance in the public water supply system, or a similar curriculum.

**Cross-Connection Control Specialist (Specialist)** – An individual who meets all the requirements of these rules and becomes certified by NCBPA to administer cross-connection control programs, to make cross-connection control surveys and to determine the need for the installation of backflow prevention assemblies.

**Survey** - The examination of a domestic water system to determine the existence of cross-connections and the recommendation of corrective measures.

**A. General Requirements For Certification And Re-Certification:**

- 1) Candidates for certification must be 18 years old or older by the date of the certification examination.
- 2) Candidates for certification must be a graduate equivalent to high school level or a GED.
- 3) Examinations for the certification will be based on Need-to-Know Criteria as approved by the Board of Directors.
- 4) Applicants must hold current NCBPA Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester certificate.
- 5) To qualify for certification, a person must have attended and successfully passed a cross-connection control specialist course that is recognized by the NCBPA. The course must provide at least forty hours of instruction covering theory of backflow prevention and cross-connection control, applicable laws and regulations, and techniques involved in making cross-connection control surveys of water users premises and an examination.
  - a) All applicants who have attended an approved Specialist course must show proof of attendance when applying for certification exam.
  - b) If a person can demonstrate that they have received certification as a Specialist within the previous twelve (12) months of applying for the NCBPA certification by the American Water Works Association (AWWA), American Backflow Prevention Association (ABPA), or other similar organizations recognized by NCBPA, the Certification Administrator may consider the coursework requirement has been fulfilled.
  - c) The applicant must submit an NCBPA application within 30 days prior to taking the certification exam. Other arrangements may be made only if authorized by the Certification Administrator.
  - d) The applicant must pay all applicable fees to NCBPA, or make arrangements with the Certification Administrator, prior to the examination date.
- 6) Upon successful completion of the written and/or practical examination, a Specialist shall agree in writing to comply with all provisions of the NCBPA certification requirements.
- 7) Certification is valid for two years from the date of issuance.

## **B. CERTIFICATION RENEWAL**

- 1) To be eligible for certificate renewal, certificate holders submitting renewal applications shall complete show proof of 12 Contact Hours since the previous renewal or issuance of the certificate. No more than 25% of the contact hours shall be safety courses.
- 2) The Specialist shall retain proof of continuing education as supplied by the acceptable provider for a minimum of four years.
- 3) Any certificate holder selected for an audit of compliance with the continuing education requirement shall submit to the Certification Administrator copies of proof of completion provided to the applicant for renewal by the provider of the continuing education since the date of last certificate renewal, within 30 calendar days of notification of selection.
  - a) The certificate for any applicant for renewal who is found to have not successfully completed the continuing education requirement of this article will be revoked.
  - b) The applicant shall have the right to appeal such findings to the NCBPA Board of Directors. An appeal shall be requested in writing to the Certification Administrator of the discipline in question.
- 4) When applying for renewal of a certificate, an applicant may request a waiver of all or part of the continuing education requirement. To be eligible for a waiver, an applicant shall verify the following in writing to the Certification Administrator:
  - a) Residence in another country for at least half the period since the certificate was issued or last renewed, and that this prevented completion of the continuing education requirements; or
  - b) Absence from employment due to military service for at least half the certificate period since the certificate was issued or last renewed, and that this prevented completion of the continuing evaluation requirements.
- 5) Each successfully renewed certificate shall be valid for a period of two years.
- 6) Certificate holders can apply for renewal up to 6 months prior to their certificate expiration date, and no more than 6 months from the date of expiration on their certificate. After this grace period, applicants must enroll in a full 40 hour course to acquire a new certificate and shall be issued a new certificate number.

## **C. EXAMINATION**

- 1) Any person applying for initial certification is required to pass a written exam.
  - a) A person must obtain a score of no less than 70% on the written exam in order to successfully pass the exam.
- 2) Any person applying for re-certification must have attended a minimum of 4 NCBPA educational seminars or show proof of 12 Contact Hours within the re-certification period from an approved training organization, in order to qualify for re-certification.
  - a) No more than 25% of the contact hours shall be safety courses.
- 3) If an applicant fails to appear for a scheduled exam without prior notification to the Administrator and/or NCBPA office he/she will be required to resubmit an application and fee for a future exam.

#### **D. ACCEPTANCE OF CONTINUING EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

- 1) Only providers who offer continuing education programs that meet all of the following criteria shall be accepted:
  - a) Use instructors who are competent in subject matter by education, training, or experience, and maintain a brief biography for the instructor,
  - b) Offer courses that are a minimum of 50 minutes in duration excluding evaluation by participants of the continuing education program,
  - c) Offer courses that are relevant to the scope of duties related to the certificate,
  - d) Have clearly stated, measurable, education objectives,
  - e) Use teaching methods which are consistent with the objectives of the continuing education program; and
  - f) Have a method for determining participants' attendance and/or participation in the class and exams.
  - g) Maintain accurate and complete records and copies of all reference materials, handouts and any and all other additional materials provided to and used by the attendees and is able to provide copies upon request.

#### **E. SPECIALIST RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1) It is the responsibility of the Specialist to comply with all related laws, regulations and policies.
- 2) Specialists shall maintain their gauges in good repair and have them calibrated/repared when necessary to manufacturer's specifications. Each Specialist is responsible for consulting with their water jurisdiction of any gauge repair or calibration requirements.
- 3) The Specialist shall ensure that he/she is using the proper test report form as required by the local drinking water jurisdiction.
- 4) A Specialist shall submit a test report to their local water jurisdiction that the backflow prevention device is located for every test that he/she performs.
- 5) The test report shall be filled out completely with all required information.
- 6) The test report shall be submitted timely to the appropriate local water jurisdiction.
- 7) A Specialist shall not knowingly file a false statement or report regarding a backflow prevention assembly.
- 8) A Specialist shall be familiar and comply with all testing and backflow prevention assembly requirements adopted by NCBPA, SWRCB, or their local drinking water jurisdiction.
- 9) A Specialist shall notify NCBPA of any address changes prior to expiration of their Specialist Certificate.

#### **F. NCBPA RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1) Board of Directors shall appoint a Certification Administrator who will be responsible for administering the entire examination process, including but not limited to;
  - a) establishing an annual calendar with locations for testing,

- b) takes direction from the Board of Directors in administering the certification program,
  - c) coordinate with NCBPA members to streamline examination process,
  - d) serve as first point of contact to evaluate complaints of the examination process,
  - e) reports to the Board of Directors on complex examinations, and
  - f) performs all associated duties with the Cross-Connection Control Specialist certification program.
- 2) Board of Directors shall evaluate the examination process annually to determine the following:
    - a) Streamline process does not cause undue hardship to members and water purveyors.
    - b) Maximize the efficiency of the examination process with minimized cost to members.
    - c) Consider all comments previously submitted by members and non-members.
  - 3) Re-certification notices shall be sent by NCBPA to the address requested by the Specialist approximately 90 days prior to expiration. The notices shall list available re-certification dates.
  - 4) Any modifications to the Need-to-Know Criteria, examination process, or related area shall be approved by the Board of Directors and shall be effective no less than 6 months after Board of Directors approval date. All modifications shall be in writing and made available for all members to review no less than 30 days prior to considering the modification.
  - 5) Certification, re-certification and Specialist list fees are set by the NCBPA Board of Directors and are subject to change. Any modifications of any fees shall be effective no less than 6 months from the date of Board of Director's approval.
  - 6) NCBPA shall maintain a list of certified Cross-Connection Control Specialists to be available to the public.

## **G. Violations and penalties**

- 1) The Certification Administrator may suspend, revoke or refuse to renew the certificate of a Specialist if a Specialist has been found to have practiced fraud or deception or has displayed gross negligence or misconduct in the performance of his or her duties as a Specialist.
- 2) Anyone may appeal their examination or status before the Board of Directors during closed session meetings. All appeals shall be submitted to the Secretary of the Board of Directors within 30 days of the examination or change in status. The written appeal shall include an explanation of the situation and include all facts to be considered by the Board of Directors. The appeal will then be an item for the next Board of Directors meeting under item classified as closed session. Only Board of Directors, the Certification Administrator, and the person appealing will be allowed to discuss the merits of the situation.
- 3) The Board of Director's decision shall be final and effective immediately.

- 4) Any violation of Sections 116800-116820 of the California Health and Safety Code may result in a misdemeanor complaint being filed with the District Attorney.