

Northern California Backflow Prevention Association Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification General Guidelines



The backflow prevention assembly tester certification program has been established to ensure that those seeking certification as a Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester 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 perform the test of an approved backflow prevention assembly to meet the regulatory requirements. Each certified tester may need to consult with the water jurisdiction of each backflow prevention assembly 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.

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.

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 a Need to Know Criteria as approved by the Board of Directors.

- 4) To qualify for certification, a person must have attended and successfully passed a backflow prevention assembly tester's course that is recognized by the NCBPA. The course must provide at least forty hours of instruction covering theory, testing and maintenance of backflow prevention devices, and the applicable laws and regulations relating thereto.
 - a) All applicants who have attended an approved tester's course must show proof of attendance when applying for certification exam.
 - b) If a person can demonstrate that they have received certification as a backflow prevention assembly tester 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.
- 5) 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.
 - a) The applicant must pay all applicable fees to NCBPA, or make arrangements with the Certification Administrator, prior to testing backflow prevention devices.
- 6) Upon successful completion of the written and/or practical examination, a tester shall agree in writing to comply with all provisions of the NCBPA certification requirements.
- 7) An NCBPA certified tester may choose to be placed on the NCBPA Certified Testers List which will be made available to the public. To be placed on the certified tester list, a tester must be currently certified by NCBPA and possess approved test gauge/gauges. The Certified Tester List will be updated during the first month of each quarter.
- 8) The certificate will be issued in the name of the tester.
- 9) Tester certification is valid for a three (3) year period.

B. Examination:

- 1) Applicants and testers shall use only the backflow prevention assembly test procedures approved by the NCBPA. Unless otherwise specified, the test procedures in the most current edition of the USC FCCCHR Manual of Cross Connection Control will be used.
- 2) Any person applying for initial certification is required to pass both a written and a performance (practical) exam.
 - a) A person must obtain a score of no less than 70% on the written exam to qualify for the practical exam.
 - b) The practical exam consists of testing a spill-proof vacuum breaker, pressure vacuum breaker, a double check valve backflow prevention device and a reduced pressure principle backflow prevention device. Other backflow prevention devices that are approved by the USC Foundation for Cross Connection Control and Hydraulic Research, the State Water Resources Control Board and NCBPA may be

added and included in the certification exam when NCBPA Board of Directors deems the need is warranted.

- c) During the practical examination, a test report form will be supplied and must be completed for each device tested.
- 3) 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) Applicants are required to pass both a written and a performance (practical) exam. A person must obtain a score of no less than 70% on the written exam to qualify for the practical exam.
 - b) The practical exam consists of testing a spill-proof vacuum breaker, pressure vacuum breaker, a double check valve backflow prevention device and a reduced pressure principle backflow prevention device.
 - c) Other backflow prevention devices that are approved by the USC Foundation for Cross Connection Control and Hydraulic Research, the State Water Resources Control Board and NCBPA may be added and included in the certification exam when NCBPA Board of Directors deems the need is warranted.
 - d) During the practical examination, a test report form will be supplied and must be completed for each device tested.
 - e) No more than 25% of the contact hours shall be safety courses.
 - f) Renewals: 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.

D. Tester responsibilities

- 1) It is the responsibility of the tester to comply with all related laws, regulations and policies.
- 2) Testers shall maintain their gauges in good repair and have them calibrated/repared when necessary to manufacturer's specifications. Each tester is responsible for consulting with their water jurisdiction of any gauge repair or calibration requirements.
- 3) The tester shall ensure that he/she is using the proper test report form as required by the local drinking water jurisdiction.
- 4) A tester 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 tester shall not knowingly file a false statement or report regarding a backflow prevention assembly.
- 8) A tester 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 tester shall notify NCBPA of any address changes prior to expiration of their Tester Certificate.

E. 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 backflow prevention assembly tester 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 tester 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 tester 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 backflow prevention assembly testers to be available to the public.

F. Proctors

- 1) Applicants to be NCBPA Proctors must meet the following criteria:
 - a) have re-certified at least one time.
 - b) attend a Proctor training course every two (2) years, which includes a practical examination demonstration.
 - c) pass the Proctor/Proctor-in-Charge examination process.
 - d) All requirements as established by the NCBPA Certification Committee and approved by the NCBPA Board of Directors.
- 2) Certified Proctors from other recognized backflow testing certification organizations may be granted reciprocity by the Certification Administrator.
- 3) Certification Administrator shall assign Proctors and Proctors-in-Charge to each test site.

- 4) Proctors shall administer the NCBPA examination process as covered in the training course, or as otherwise instructed by the Certification Administrator.

G. Violations and penalties

- a. The Certification Administrator may suspend, revoke or refuse to renew the certificate of a tester if a tester 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 certified backflow prevention assembly tester.
- b. 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.
- c. The Board of Director's decision shall be final and effective immediately.
- d. 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.