

## **Criteria for Selecting a Backflow Tester / Technician / Company**

Selecting a backflow testing company or tester to certify your backflow preventer can be a difficult task, especially since it only comes up once a year when your water utility sends you the dreaded "Backflow Testing Due" letter. The purpose of this document is to assist the water consumer in selecting a tester or company, and the questions you should ask before making that selection.

Many larger water utilities maintain a listing of testers that can test in their district. Some water districts require testers to attend special training programs or meet special requirements set forth by the water district. Based on the statement above, the first step is to check with your water district. Every water district is different, so this is a critical step.

If your water purveyor does not provide a list of testers, then it is up to you as a water consumer to select one. The BPECC website is working to provide a listing of testers based on geographical region, in which case, the questions below are relevant for a consumer to ask:

- Is the tester's backflow testing certification current?
- Is the tester allowed to test in the water district where the test is needed?
- If the device is on a fire suppression system, does the water district require special training or licensing by a tester to test this type of device? Does the tester have this training or licensing?
- Is the tester's test kit calibration current? Annual accuracy certification is required.
- Does the tester carry liability and workers compensation insurance?
- Does the tester send a copy of the test results immediately to the water authority according to rules & regulations?
- What is the price to test one device? Is there a discount for multiple devices?
- Are there any extra charges ex: trip charge mileage etc.?
- If the backflow assembly needs repairs, what is the cost of labor and parts?
- Does the tester carry a selection of parts if needed, if not, will there be an extra charge when they acquire the needed parts and retest after the repair?
- Does the tester have advanced training in diagnostics and repair?
- Does the tester "Tag" the device after testing? Some water districts require this.
- Is the tester aware of any other special requirements of the water district?
- Is tester aware of local & national approval agencies regarding BF assemblies?

As with any business transaction, always ask questions up front and be informed. Get multiple bids if more than one tester or company is available. The Colorado Primary Drinking Water Regulations require YOU, as a consumer, to keep three(3) years of tests on site for every backflow prevention device in your control. It is the responsibility of the tester to submit the test report(s) to the owner and the water district in a timely manner. This is usually 5 to 7 day after the test(s) is/are performed. Most of the testers do a pretty good job of complying with local codes, but in some cases the water district will lose the report or get so far behind that they may send you a Second Notice Test Due letter. You should keep a copy of the test report on file, so if you receive a second notice, you can easily send a copy to the water purveyor.