Suggested Annual Letter to your Customers.

It is time for your annual field test. This test is required for all approved backflow prevention assemblies.

All of the backflow manufacturers' recommend that the assemblies be tested at least once a year.

You may receive a list of approved and certified backflow prevention testers from your water company.

Please contact one of the testers on your list. You may want to call several testers and get a quote for the charges. The field test takes about ten minutes.

If the assembly needs to be repaired the rubber parts repair kits are usually very reasonable.

Often the assembly only needs to be cleaned.

The annual field test normally takes about 10 minutes. If it needs a cleaning or new rubber repair parts it may take a few minutes more. Usually the initial test, a good cleaning, replacing any damaged rubber parts, and a final test can be accomplished in one hour for assemblies two inches and smaller.

The average cost in Florida for residential testing is about $50.00. Commercial customers may be slightly more.

These approved backflow prevention assemblies are designed to last from twenty to fifty years. They should not be replaced unless parts are no longer available or if the assembly has sustained damage to the body.

The certified testers can order and receive repair parts with a next day delivery. Many will have the parts on their truck.

The reduced pressure backflow prevention assembly RP) only requires four tests.

1. Check valve #1 must hold tight.
2. The relief valve should open before the gauge drops below 2.0 psi.
3. Check valve #2 must hold tight with backpressure.
4. Check valve #1 should read 5.0 psi or higher on the gauge.

The assembly should be able to be tested even though the outlet shut-off valve has a slight leak. Most times the assembly simply needs to be cleaned internally.

If you have a double check valve assembly (DCVA) there are only two tests.

1. Check valve #1 must read 1.0 psi or higher on the gauge.
2. Check valve #2 must read 1.0 psi or higher on the gauge.

Lawn irrigation systems must have either a RP or Pressure Vacuum Breaker for proper protection of your drinking water and the public water system.

If you have a Pressure Vacuum Breaker (PVB) there are only two tests.

1. The air inlet valve must open before the gauge drops below 1.0 psi.

2. The check valve must hold a minimum of 1.0 psi.

Remember, these assemblies are designed to be easily repaired. If the tester tells you that the assembly must be replaced ask them to give you the old assembly. After all it is yours. You paid for it. You can send the replaced assembly to you CCC Supervisor at the utility company. They can study the assembly to see what has caused the failure.

Les O'Brien

"I find it interesting that some folks are willing to compromise the safety of their drinking water in order to save a few dollars."