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Bellevue, WA 98006

May 2025 Newsletter

OFFICERS 2025

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Web Master: Don Leland d.leland@stopinc.com	STOP Inc./CBT	425 954 5787

Hello Members of the Group,

The May meeting was held via Teams on 05/21/2025 at 10:00 AM.

Attendees:

Randy Hude – Arbiter Incorporated; Forrest Bailey – City of Tumwater; Rob Main --- On Site Testing; DeLynn Erickson -- Woodinville Water District; Kathy Caldwell – city of Snohomish; Joe Barbee – WA Dept of Health; Don Risto – city of Battle Ground; Tim Cantwell – Woodinville Water District; Don Leland – STOP, Inc; Alex Gobble – Belfair; Troy French – Zirkle Fruit in Selah; Iliya Andreev – City of Redmond; Candido Granillo-Dodds – WA Dept of Health; Josh Nicholas – city of Monroe; Indee Girven – Kitsap PUD; Kim Strickler – city of Ridgefield; Mariano Romulo – City of Lynnwood Public Works; Josh – unknown attendee; Brad Zahnow – AAA Backflow Testing; Carla Snyder – Coal Creek Utility District;

Old Business

- Vendor list emailed and will be discussed between Wednesday and Randy and shared with the larger executive committee upon completion.
- Exhibitor charge for 2025 meeting. Proposals ran from \$250-\$300
- Member rate: \$160, Non-Member Rate had not been determined.
- Square is not setup as a specific account with The Group. Iliya hoping for the easiest way to process these payments. Zelle, Venmo, or get a new Square account. Going to the PO Box and collecting and depositing the checks is not difficult for Iliya. Need to have an e-payment option ahead of the announcement.
- Site Discussion for the October 2025 Conference:
 - SRC4 gets the rooms free of charge and only pays for the food. Perhaps we should consider other venues that could host our non-profit's annual meeting for less than usual. Green River mentioned as a potential site.
 - Don recommends picking a site for this year and next and then looking into these lower-cost option sites.
 - Delynn wondering if we should go ahead and book with Delta in Everett.
 - Agreed it might be best to sew up the Delta for the conference for 2025; Voted on and approved by the attendees. 20 rooms to be held.
- Treasurer Business – Iliya unable to get the books from Chris S's accountant for 2024. Still need to reimburse Wednesday and Iliya for expenses outlaid by himself. Going to be ordering checks, and Iliya has debit card in the Group name. Any bookings that need to be done on behalf of The Group, it would be best for him to do the booking. He will use a spreadsheet to keep track of the books.
- Zoom renewed or lapsed?
 - Wednesday: we moved from regular to Pro for the Webinar only.
 - Quick vote: change to Teams from Zoom when Zoom lapses in July.
 - Teams meeting via the Group's outlook account, monthly meetings scheduled.
- Brightwater Treatment Plant Field Trip 7/16/2025 – still waiting for the final head-count limit, wondering if there could be many tour groups, etc. Tim C is working with Matt from Brightwater but not having much luck getting a response.

New Business

Joe Barbee from WA department of Health – brief bio – from the inner-city to the Army learning about water treatment. Started with Seattle Public Utilities and Green River before Bill Bernier pulled him over to work at WA Dept of Health.

- 1) Joe's presentation started with the history of backflow.
 - a. Chicago World's Fair 1933 – 1400+ people sick, nearly 100 dead from a sewer system overwhelmed
 - b. 15000 lb check valve from 1870s
 - c. WA comprehensive 1970 Cross Connection Rule laid the foundation in our state
 - i. Concept of severe and high-hazard premises
- 2) WA Dept of Health stats for Backflow Assembly Testing Data:

Table 4: Backflow Assembly Testing Data

Device	Total	% Tested	% Failed
Air Gap	751	41.0	4.1
RPBA	88,116	83.7	9.0
RPDA	945	68.4	8.0
DCVA	279,555	82.4	3.7
DCDA	17,262	86.0	4.5
PVBA	5,011	59.0	6.5
SVBA	485	73.4	13.8
AVB	1,192	18.9	0
2023 Total	393,317	82.31%	5.00%
2022 Total	376,417	76.11%	4.18%
2021 Total	382,412	80.10%	4.32%
2020 Total	368,176	81.62%	4.16%
2019 Total	351,849	85.66%	4.40%
2018 Total	332,884	85.31%	5.53%

- a.
- 3) So what are some of the actual logged incidents in WA state?
 - a. Pierce County hospital 11/11/2003
 - i. Carbonated beverage dispenser → foamy yellow water
 - ii. Hose was used to circumvent RPBA by contractor. Contractor states “the hose bibb had a backflow preventer on it...” Additionally, there was a cross connection upstream of this hose bibb that was missed
 - b. King County Bank 04/05/1996
 - i. Water service shut off for repair
 - ii. Corrosion chemical backflowed into domestic service → purple water at sinks/toilets
 - c. Thurston County Construction Site 03/13/2004
 - i. New water main under construction
 - ii. Venturi led to contractor's bleach backflowed into the system and had to be flushed.
 - d. Snohomish County 01/24/2003
 - i. Customer's garden hose led to backflow event that thankfully was limited in damage
 - e. Multi-family residence in King County had an additional line circumventing the backflow prevention assemblies
 - i. Fertilizer into drinking water



- ii.
- f. Other incidents were noted but only discussed briefly:

Recent Backflow Incidents

1. Customer hospitalized after chemical burns in the shower. Caustic overfeed due to backsiphonage conditions during alternative water main flow patterns during flushing.
2. The investigation of an e-coli positive sample identified a rainwater catchment system being used for “non-potable” uses in a small church. Close investigation revealed a cross-connection between the rainwater storage and the potable water make-up line.
3. An unapproved well used for “non-potable” uses in a small restaurant was found to be cross-connected to the building plumbing.
4. 4 instances of Compressed air injected into the distribution system through a lawn irrigation system. Air compressors were incorrectly hooked to backflow assembly test cocks to winterize lawn sprinkler systems.
5. An investigation of “muddy” water reports revealed a customer using compressed air to blow-out the fire sprinkler system in a small business.

- i.
- 4) Interesting Factoid about homes with no installed backflow preventer:

Did you know?

- A study published by the Water Research Foundation in 2010, using backflow detecting water meters, found that 5% of homes registered a backflow incident of 1 gallon or more each year. However, the impact of these residential backflow incidents on distribution system disinfectant residual remains undetermined.

- a.

Contact Information



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lilya Andreev of the City of Redmond presented on his revision of the Cross Connection Control Program.

- 1) The program was last revised in 1983 (!) and referred to codes that were no longer active or had been superseded.
 - a. Old program did not reference the WAC but only UPC.
 - b. New program refers to WAC primarily but also UPC.
 - c. High hazard connections must be checked every 3 years.
- 2) Most all employees are certified as Cross-Connection Control Specialists to increase redundancy.
- 3) Testing Requirements in the post-COVID era:

- A.** Assemblies shall be tested when installed, repaired, or moved, and annually thereafter.
- B.** Test reports shall be accepted only by Washington Department of Health (WA DOH) certified Backflow Assembly Testers (BAT). The criteria for tester certification and test kit calibration shall be in accordance with the most current version of the following:

- (I)** Manual of Cross-Connection Control published by the University of Southern California Foundation of Cross-Connection Control and Hydraulic Research
- (II)** Accepted Procedure and Practice published by the Cross-Connection Control Committee of the Pacific Northwest Section of the American Water Works Association
- (III)** Recommended Practice for Backflow Prevention and Cross-Connection Control published by the American Water Works Association

- C.** Reports, at a minimum, shall contain the following information: BAT number, test kit serial number and last calibration date, assembly serial number, valve PSID, whether the valve leaked or closed tight, whether repairs were made, line pressure at the time of the test.
- D.** Tests performed more than 60 days before the assembly's due date shall not be accepted.
- E.** The CCS shall mail, via USPS, a notice to all customers with backflow assemblies a reminder no later than 30 days before the assembly is due to be tested.
- F.** The CCS shall mail via, USPS, a final notice to all customers with overdue backflow assemblies no later than 30 days after the assembly test was due.
- G.** At a minimum, the notice shall include the following information - due date, serial number of the assembly, type, make and model, size, location.
- H.** Customers who are not in compliance shall receive a shut-off notice posted on the premises at least 72 hours prior to service termination.
- I.** In the event of a backflow incident or at the CCS's discretion the service termination may be done without prior notice.
- J.** Service restoration for testing purposes will be available during the CCS's regular business hours by appointment only.

a.

4) Record Keeping

SECTION 7.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

- A. Information regarding the City's backflow prevention program is available on the City's website under the Drinking Water Operations section.
- B. The Annual Consumer Confidence Report includes information on the CCCP.
- C. Bill inserts are utilized to reach customers directly.
- D. A phone line and email are available for customers to reach out to the CCS directly.

SECTION 8.

RECORD KEEPING

- A. The City utilizes SwiftComply to maintain electronic records of backflow assemblies, including but not limited to, physical location, make and model, size, serial number, installation date, hazard level, compliance status, test reports, surveys.
- B. Air Gaps are inspected annually by the CCS and the inspection results recorded.
- C. BATs are required to submit test reports directly in SwiftComply in order to avoid clerical errors when entering data. Paper submissions are not accepted.
- D. Only approved BATs are able to submit test reports in SwiftComply. The CCS reviews and approves each BAT before they can submit reports. Approval is revoked annually automatically on the 31st of January, pending a renewed BAT card submission to the City.
- E. Records are retained for the life of the assembly.

a.

Old Business

- DeLynn will book the Delta Hotel Everett for the October 2025 seminar. Reach out regarding the table size specifications, tablecloth provided, etc.
- It is now reserved for 10/15/2025 from 6 am to 6 pm
- 2 banquet rooms
- Group of 20 rooms held at a discount rate
- 2 handheld wireless mics, 1 podium and projector with laptop will be coordinated with tech from hotel \$1772 for all the technology/communication including 2 hours of tech support
- How are we going to handle registration/payment?
 - Iliya to see about getting a The Group Venmo account
- How many extra spots to reserve?
 - 5 additional for wiggle room, hammered out later
- Vendors?
 - Reach out to last year's vendor list and add some other potential vendors
- Attendees?
 - Reach out to the list.
 - Have simple check-in morning of event A-L, M-Z by last name

- Nametags with raffle tickets, Don to bring.
-
- Needs for the show:
 - Stampers for CEU (1 person)
 - Management of CEU (1 person)
 - Check-in, nametags (2 people needed)
 - Raffle/vendor management (1-2 people)
 - Collect door prizes (1 person)
 - Representative for hotel (1 person)
 - Emcee (1 person) Kathy, Don, or Wednesday
- Membership fee changes.

Potential Speakers for the Seminar

2024 Speakers

President, Bill Bernier, Tiffany Miller, Sean Cleary, Wednesday Smith, Bill Bernier, Group of 3

2025 Potential Speakers

- 1) Jim P. of BAVCO – mostly retired but perhaps available
- 2) Henry Chang of USC FCCCHR – do we have a specific topic for him to discuss?
- 3) Sean Cleary of IAPMO – do we have a specific topic for him to discuss?
- 4) Bill Bernier and Tiffany Miller always present to talk about DOH stuff
- 5) Katherine McLaughlin of Texas Environmental possibly
- 6) Nathan with D.o.H. long history of backflow? Bill may have to give Nathan's talk due to travel limits.
- 7) Mark or Doug with American Backflow?
- 8) Scott Hemingway on cross connection events?

Potential Topics for the Seminar

- 1) Topic for consideration: the authority of jurisdiction regarding the agreement between UPC-approved devices for plumbers and the CCS USC-approved assembly list. Historical example of AHJ, UPC vs USC.
- 2) Regarding ASR Cream form B. Coordination with Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) on CCC.
- 3) Ecolab is not an approved USC, CCS was having business remove them and install a backflow assemblies. Ecolab was losing business, complained to UPC was then approved by plumbing inspectors supersedes CCS.
- 4) Any backflow events locally that someone could discuss at the meeting?

Follow-ups from this meeting:

- New website – Don L will hopefully have the updated website ready to share and launch soon.
- 2026 or alternative/cheaper sites for 2025:
 - Don will follow up with Eric Shea about using the WETRC facility.
- Iliya will check with The Redmond Center about 2026
- Wednesday will follow up with Lake Washington Institute of Technology about 2026
- Randy will set up the Teams Meetings (monthly) starting with the next meeting in May 2025.
- Catering for the field trip to be decided in June 2025. Iliya to reach out to a buddy about cooking BBQ. Otherwise Iliya will pick up pre-made Costco food trays. Randy to create a flyer/survey/attendance email to get a headcount.
- Since the meeting venue is secure, need to create a “Save the Date” e-blast.
- Need to schedule the speakers/topics from April meeting aiming for 4 speakers. Watts regional channel manager gave a great talk at national ABPA meeting, may consider her. Delynn to follow-up with Watts.
- Need to schedule a follow-up meeting specifically about the tasks needed to plan out and finalize the October annual seminar. Randy will send out the follow-up email to agree on a time.

Next meeting is scheduled for 6/18/2025 from 10 am to 12 pm. Meeting will be held via Teams. Topic is Development of a Cross Connection Control Program and the discussion will be led by Bill Bernier from WA DoH and Alex Gobble from Belfair Water District.

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 AM PST.