



*Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester  
Certification Program  
Handbook*

*1 September 2023*

**American Backflow Prevention Association**  
**Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification Program**  
**Handbook**  
**(9-1-23)**

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**1.1 CERTIFICATION COMMITTEE CHARGE (5/2/03)**

The American Backflow Prevention Association's Certification Committee is established by the Association's By-Laws. The committee is charged with the responsibility to evaluate certification needs in the backflow prevention industry and develop guidelines and need-to-know criteria as appropriate. Including, but not limited to, the responsibility for recommending and developing policy and procedures that determine the technical aspects of the American Backflow Prevention Association's Voluntary Backflow Prevention Certification Program(s).

## 1.2 HISTORY OF PROGRAM (11-9-21)

### **AMERICAN BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSOCIATION BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY TESTER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM HISTORY**

The Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester is needed by administrative authorities to assure that installed backflow prevention assemblies continue to protect the drinking water. The American Backflow Prevention Association (ABPA) Certification Committee (previously known as the Training Committee or the Training and Education Committee) completed the task of establishing criteria for what a Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester needs to know. Once a person has been trained, an examination protocol had to be developed to verify the applicant's knowledge against this need-to-know criteria. The applicant must also be able to demonstrate their ability to field test and diagnose the operation of the different types of backflow prevention assemblies.

#### **THE PAST**

ABPA is an organization dedicated to providing its members with the appropriate tools to implement and run an effective cross connection control program. One tool that was requested was a Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester (Tester) written examination. This would allow a local instructor to administer an examination to a student in order to help evaluate their understanding of the basic principles that a tester needed to know. The written "practice" examination was developed and sold to instructors who needed a written examination for their classes, however the ABPA did not offer any type of certification. In 1990 questions began to arise about the many different tester course outlines the instructors used and the ability of this single written examination to properly judge the student's comprehension of the subject matter. The written examination needed to be changed to meet this need.

Before the examination could be properly modified there had to be consistency in training. The need to establish a course outline with a consistent core of information became necessary to assure different instructors were teaching the same subject matter. The initial step performed by the Certification Committee (Committee) was a backflow prevention assembly tester (Tester) job analysis. The job analysis was performed to determine the key tasks performed as a Tester, and what knowledge and skills were needed to perform those tasks. This would help the training providers so that they could provide the required training to properly prepare their students. In 1992 the ABPA Certification Committee (Committee) completed the task of developing the Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Course Outline. With the completed course outline a balanced written examination commensurate with the course outline was developed to assure that the tester demonstrated their comprehension of the subject matter. The Committee further saw the need to assure that the written examination was secure and not passed around in an unauthorized fashion. The Committee developed a bank of written examination questions to draw from so that different written examinations could be developed to assure confidentiality. All these steps were done to reflect standard industry practices for written examinations.

Instructors used the ABPA Tester Course Outline and also purchased the original ABPA written examination which was administered to their students. However, this process was not intended to certify the individual as a backflow prevention assembly tester. Many administrative authorities expressed the need for a certification program that they could rely on to document the Tester's understanding of the need to know requirements contained in the Tester Course Outline, and their ability to perform the field test procedures. ABPA was asked to develop and administer such a certification program. In 1992 the ABPA Certification Committee was given the task to develop this program which incorporates a performance or hands-on demonstration of the tester's ability to properly conduct a field test on various backflow prevention assemblies. The Committee saw the need to develop the written and performance examination guidelines so that the examinations are complete in content and administered fairly.

With the Tester Course Outline, the written examination bank of questions, and the written and performance examination guidelines developed, the Committee was asked in 1993 to tie the whole package together and establish a National Voluntary Certification Program for the backflow prevention assembly tester. The Committee developed the set of Rules for the administration of the process to acquire an ABPA backflow prevention assembly tester certification and presented the Certification Program to the ABPA Board of Directors on January 23, 1994, at which time it was unanimously approved, and implementation began immediately.

## DETAILS OF THE PROGRAM

The ABPA Backflow Prevention Assembly Voluntary Certification Program was drawn up on a consensus basis to assure it properly reflected the needs of administrative authorities. The Committee was made up of a balance between instructors, water works officials, plumbing officials, and backflow prevention professionals.

The Committee started with the Tester Course Outline, and verified that the Tester job analysis clearly identified the key tasks performed by the Tester, and what knowledge and skills were needed to perform those tasks. This insured that the examination process could be developed to reflect those key tasks. The key tasks and knowledge are reflected in the ABPA Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Need-To-Know Criteria. In re-evaluating it, the Committee confirmed that it still presented the required knowledge and skills for an applicant who wishes to operate as a backflow prevention assembly tester. The job analysis also indicated how critical each task was and how frequently each task was performed by the Tester. The results of this job analysis provided ABPA with the foundation for the development of a valid Tester certification examination.

The Need-To-Know Criteria was established with six subject matter sections. Based upon how critical each task was rated, and how frequently the task was performed, the six sections of the Need-To-Know Criteria were evaluated and weighted by percentage. A 100-question written examination was then constructed of questions using the same weighted percentage as the Need-To-Know Criteria. The Committee agreed that the written examination must be kept secure and not distributed indiscriminately. For the written examination to properly reflect the applicant's understanding of the subject it is important that the applicant not see the written examination before the exam is administered and the applicant shall not be allowed to see the written examination after the exam is administered. To further assure the examination validity, an ABPA appointed third party examination monitor or proctor shall hand carry the written examinations to the test site and to administer a closed book examination. The examination monitor may grade the written examinations on site, and return all written examination materials to ABPA at the conclusion of the exam. In this way, no copies of the written examination could be accidentally put in circulation to compromise the security of the written examination.

In addition to the written examination, the Tester applicant is required to take the ABPA performance examination. The closed book performance examination is designed to evaluate the applicant's ability to perform a field test on a reduced pressure principle backflow prevention assembly, a double check backflow prevention assembly, and a pressure vacuum breaker. Beginning January 2004, the spill resistant pressure vacuum breaker was added to the written and performance examinations. This performance examination is administered by an ABPA appointed third party proctor, that is, someone other than the applicant's teacher or instructor. ABPA performance exam proctors must successfully complete the ABPA proctor training program to comply with the requirements detailed in the ABPA Proctor Qualifications.

When the Tester applicant passes both the written and performance examinations, they are issued an ABPA Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification which is valid for three years from the date of issuance. Every three (3) years the Tester must re-certify by participating in a written and

performance examination in the same manner as the initial examination to demonstrate their continued proficiency with the Tester's Need-to-Know Criteria.

An ABPA Tester's certification is subject to revocation by the ABPA Board of Directors upon submission of conclusive evidence of fraud, deceit, gross negligence or misconduct in the performance of their duties as a Tester. The ABPA Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification Program is a voluntary program. ABPA developed this program at the direct request of its members to meet their needs. It is up to the local administrative authority to recognize a certification as valid in their area of jurisdiction.

In May 2008 the Committee evaluated many of the commonly used field test procedures in North America. The field test procedures were evaluated by the Committee to determine which field test procedure provided the most accurate data, most often, on a backflow prevention assembly which is in a properly working and a non-working condition. This evaluation was conducted by the Committee at an open workshop during the annual ABPA Conference. The workshop was announced in the *ABPA News* inviting all interested parties to attend. The Committee and the interested parties participated with the demonstration of the most commonly used field test procedures, and then the field test procedures were evaluated on their ability to provide accurate data in properly working and non-working assemblies. After an extensive review of the many field test procedures, the Committee unanimously approved the adoption of the field test procedures that received the highest score in the evaluation process. These were the field test procedures in the USC- FCCCHR 10th Edition Manual of Cross-Connection Control (also referenced as ABPA 1.1.11). On October 4, 2009 the ABPA Board of Directors approved the Certification Committee's recommendation to update the field test procedures used in the ABPA Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification Program.

The value of the ABPA Certification to a Tester is that they can possess a certification that documents their proficiency of the need-to-know criteria and their ability to perform the field tests of the backflow prevention assemblies.

It is the Committee's hope that we have been able to answer your questions on the ABPA Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Voluntary Certification Program. Testers who have any questions should contact their administrative authority regarding Tester certification requirements in their local area. Administrative authorities interested in additional information should contact ABPA. ABPA is proud to present this benefit to the cross-connection control community.

More information about the program may be found at [www.abpa.org](http://www.abpa.org).

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### 1.3 BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY TESTER - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (5-5-23)

## Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester - FAQ's

### What Is The ABPA Tester Certification Program?

The ABPA maintains a voluntary certification program for those individuals meeting all of the requirements of the RULES governing the program. A Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester (Tester) is certified to field test any type or manufacturer of backflow prevention assembly.

### Where Is The ABPA Certification Accepted?

Most States or Provinces do not have mandated Tester programs, therefore, you will find that different areas may have very different requirements. In many jurisdictions where there are no local certification programs, the ABPA Tester Certification may be recognized. Check with your local water or health departments to determine if the ABPA Tester Certification is recognized in your area.

### Do I Need to be Certified?

Yes! Certification means that you have met minimum performance requirements as a backflow prevention assembly tester.

### How Do I Get ABPA Certified?

You should have successfully completed a course of instruction or have prior experience, or a suitable combination of both.

**Training** - Training in the theory, design and field testing of backflow prevention assemblies.

**Experience** - Show at least two (2) years of experience in the testing of backflow prevention assemblies within a recognized certification program.\*

*(\* Training, closed book written and performance exam where student demonstrated their ability to field test and troubleshoot backflow prevention assemblies)*

### How Much Does the ABPA Tester Certification Cost?

Current application fees can be found on the ABPA website: [www.abpa.org](http://www.abpa.org)

### Do I Have to Take a Test?

**Yes.** There is a two-part test. A closed book written examination and performance examination must be successfully completed. The performance exam requires that you successfully demonstrate the field test procedures for the:

RP - *Reduced pressure principle assembly*

DC - *Double check valve assembly*

PVB - *Pressure vacuum breaker assembly*

SVB - *Spill Resistant pressure vacuum breaker assembly*

### What's on the Test?

**Part 1 - Written Exam** - The written exam is a multiple-choice exam covering subjects contained in the ABPA Need-to-Know Criteria, such as:

- Hydraulic and Backflow Principles
- Theory of Backflow and Cross-connections
- Codes and Regulations
- Agency Responsibilities
- Mechanical Equipment

(Design, operation, component breakdown, application, installation requirements, field test procedures, reporting)

**Part 2 - Performance Exam** - The hands-on exam requires that the applicant demonstrate the field

test procedures to an ABPA proctor. The applicant is expected to be capable of diagnosing the condition of the assemblies when they work properly, as well as when there is a malfunction, such as:

RP

Failing 1st check valve  
Failing 2nd check valve  
Malfunctioning RV  
Leaking #2 shutoff valve  
(Dir of flow & backpressure)

DC

Failing 1st check valve  
Failing 2nd check valve  
Leaking #1 shutoff valve  
Leaking #2 shutoff valve  
(Dir of flow & backpressure)

PVB

Failing check valve  
Malfunctioning air inlet  
Leaking #1 shutoff valve  
Leaking #2 shutoff valve

SVB

Failing check valve  
Malfunctioning air inlet  
Leaking #1 shutoff valve  
Leaking #2 shutoff valve

**What Field Test Procedure Do I Need to Know?**

The ABPA 1.1.11 (USC FCCCHR10<sup>th</sup> Edition) field test procedures will be used.

**How do I sign up?**

Applications and instructions can be found on the ABPA website.

**Where & When are Examinations Offered?**

A schedule of exams is available on the ABPA website. Some training facilities arrange to have the ABPA Tester examinations administered at the conclusion of their training program.

**What do I get?**

A qualified applicant who successfully completes both the written and performance examination will receive a wall certificate containing your name, date of certification, and certification number. A wallet card is also provided.

**How long does my ABPA Certification last?**

The Tester Certification is valid for a period of three (3) years. Six (6) months before your certification expires, you will receive a notice that it is time to *recertify*.

**Do I need to take another test?**

Yes. To make sure that you maintain your proficiency as a Tester, you will be required to take a recertification examination. The recertification examination is similar to the original examination, you must successfully complete both a written and performance examination.

**What if I have additional questions?**

Go to ABPA website: [www.abpa.org](http://www.abpa.org)

**2.1 Rules Governing the Certification of Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester****AMERICAN BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSOCIATION  
RULES GOVERNING THE CERTIFICATION  
OF  
BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY TESTER  
9/1/2022****1.0 DEFINITIONS**

- 1.1 Administrator - The Association's agent appointed by the Association's Board of Director who is responsible for evaluating backflow prevention assembly tester applications, administering examinations, issuing certificates, and performing associated duties of the backflow prevention assembly tester certification program.
- 1.2 Applicant - An individual applying for ABPA backflow prevention assembly tester certification or recertification by submission of the appropriate application to the Association.
- 1.3 Association - The organization known as the American Backflow Prevention Association (ABPA)
- 1.4 Board of Directors - The current duly elected body of the Association as per the Association bylaws.
- 1.5 Certificate - A certificate issued by the Association attesting that an individual has successfully completed the examination process which demonstrates their qualifications for performing field testing of backflow prevention assemblies in accordance with the rules governing the ABPA Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification. A certificate is valid for a period of three (3) years from date of issuance.
- 1.6 Certified Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester (tester) - A person meeting all the requirements of these rules who is responsible for backflow prevention assemblies as detailed in the Association's Backflow Prevention Assembly Need-to-Know Criteria and maintains a current certificate.
- 1.7 Committee - The Association's Certification Committee as recognized by the Association's Board of Directors. The Committee is responsible for recommending and developing policy and procedures that determine the technical aspects of the program. The Committee is headed by the Committee Chair and must submit all rule changes to the Association's Board of Directors for approval.
- 1.8 Date of Issuance – The date the applicant successfully completed the written and performance examination.
- 1.9 Examination Monitor - A person that is in charge of the examination site.
- 1.10 Need-to-Know Criteria - The Association's Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Need-to-Know Criteria as developed by the Committee.

- 1.11 Performance Examination - A closed book hands on demonstration of the tester's ability to conduct a field test on backflow prevention assemblies. The tester shall be able to demonstrate their knowledge and document the results of the field test procedures.
- 1.12 Proctor - A person who administers the written and/or performance examinations. The proctor will be appointed by the Administrator for a specific examination. The proctor shall not have a private or personal interest sufficient to influence or appear to influence the objective exercise of the Proctor's official duties.
- 1.13 Recognized Certification Program - A backflow prevention assembly tester certification program which contains the following elements:
  - a. The applicant shall have attended a classroom curriculum consisting of: a) hydraulics, b) backsiphonage and backpressure, c) degree of hazard, d) cross connection control rules and regulations, e) backflow prevention assembly use, testing, installation and troubleshooting.
  - b. The recognized certification program shall have included a closed book written examination and a performance examination where the student demonstrated their ability to field test and troubleshoot backflow prevention assemblies.
- 1.14 Testing (Field) - The physical examination, field testing, and reporting of field test results of a backflow prevention assembly.
- 1.15 Written examination – the ABPA’s closed book, multiple choice written examination. The examination shall represent the topics in the Association's Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Need-to-Know Criteria.

## **2.0 GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS**

Testers under this program should:

- 2.1 Be able to carry out all duties and responsibilities associated with being a backflow prevention assembly tester as referenced in these rules.
- 2.2 Education - Have attained graduation from high school, G.E.D. equivalent or demonstrated academic equivalent.
- 2.3 Have reached the proper age requirements as needed in the jurisdiction where working.

## **3.0 GENERAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS**

- 3.1 The Association shall provide applications for the Association's Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification Program. The application shall be completed by the applicant and sent with the appropriate non-refundable fees to the Association at least fourteen (14) days prior to the examination date. The applicant shall be notified of the time and place of the appropriate examinations at the time of registration.

- 3.2 Before the examination is taken, the applicant should have successfully completed a course of instruction or show two (2) years of experience in field testing of backflow prevention assemblies within a recognized certification program. It is the responsibility of the applicant to be proficient with the Association's Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Need-to-Know Criteria prior to taking the examination.
- 3.3 The applicant shall successfully complete the Association's written and performance examinations for the backflow prevention assembly tester. Applicant shall be notified within thirty (30) days from the last examination date of passage or failure of the examinations. Upon issuance date of certificate, applicant is considered to be certified by the Association. The certificate shall be mailed within sixty (60) days of the last examination date.
- 3.4 The certification of the backflow prevention assembly tester shall be valid for three (3) years from the date of issuance.

#### **4.0 CERTIFICATION FEES**

- 4.1 The application fee for the backflow prevention assembly tester certification shall be payable to the American Backflow Prevention Association (ABPA). The current application fee shall be posted on the application forms provided by the Association.
- 4.2 The application fee must accompany the application form.

#### **5.0 EXAMINATIONS**

- 5.1 ABPA shall schedule certification examinations as needed. Special certification examinations may be requested using the Prospective Examination Date Notification form and must be submitted sixty (60) days prior to the requested examination date.
- 5.2 The Association shall use examinations developed by the Committee. Examinations shall be constructed to ensure their proper representation of the Association's Need-to-Know Criteria.
- 5.3 All examinations shall be administered by a examination monitor / proctor appointed by the Association. The examination monitor / proctor shall meet all requirements of the examination monitor / proctor qualifications of the Association. The examination monitor / proctor shall administer the necessary closed book examinations to all applicants who have completed the application per these rules.
- 5.4 The applicant shall complete the initial written examination and the performance examination within thirty (30) days of each other. Applicants failing the initial written or performance examination may retain the passing results from the initial examination for one (1) year and must apply for re-examination per Section 3 of these rules.
- 5.5 If an applicant fails to appear for a scheduled exam, without prior approval of the Association, they shall be required to re-submit an application and fees for future examinations.
- 5.6 Once an applicant successfully completes the examinations, a certificate shall be issued by the Association to the applicant. The certificate shall state the type of certification, full name of the

tester, certificate number, a date of issuance, and be signed by the Administrator.

## **6.0 RECERTIFICATION**

- 6.1 To maintain an ABPA Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification, beyond the certification expiration date, the tester shall submit an application with the appropriate fee as shown on the application to the Association for recertification. The applicant shall be required to successfully complete the written and performance examination within six (6) months prior to expiration date as referenced in Section 5 of these rules.
- 6.2 It is the responsibility of the tester to apply for recertification. Notice of a pending expiration date of certification shall be sent to the address on record for the tester.
- 6.3 The tester shall be responsible to notify the Association of a change of address.
- 6.4 Once the completed application for recertification is received by the Association, the tester shall receive notice of the examination time and location as per Section 3.1.
- 6.5 The Tester applying for re-certification shall meet all requirements of these rules.
- 6.6 Tester may retain certification number up to one year after date of expiration. Once a Tester successfully completes written and performance examination within that one year after date of expiration, applicant shall be issued a new start and expiration date.
- 6.7 If the Tester successfully completes a written and performance examination prior to six (6) months of their expiration date as referenced in Section 5 of these rules, the Tester shall be issued a new start and expiration date.

## **7.0 REVOCATION OR APPEAL**

- 7.1 The Board of Directors may revoke any certification issued under these rules upon the submission of conclusive evidence from the Committee that the tester has been found to have obtained the certification by fraud or deceit or has displayed gross negligence or misconduct in the performance of their duties as a tester.
- 7.2 The appointed Examination Monitor shall address all applicant appeals regarding the examination at the examination site. Any applicant appeal made because of the determination of the appointed Examination Monitor shall be submitted in writing within fifteen (15) days of the examination to the Association office to the Administrator. The appeal shall state the reason and all facts regarding the appeal. Any applicant appeal made because of the determination of the Administrator shall be submitted in writing within fifteen (15) days of the examination to the Association office to the Chair of the Certification Committee. The Committee shall, within thirty (30) days, make an inquiry of the appeal and give an answer in writing. A final written appeal may be made to the Association's Board of Directors. This appeal will be placed on the agenda at the next regular scheduled Board of Directors meeting. Their decision shall be final.

**8.0 REVISION OF THE RULES**

- 8.1 The Certification Committee shall be responsible for recommending revisions of these Rules when it is deemed necessary. The Board of Directors shall review and approve any changes to the rules. All revisions shall be published sixty (60) days prior to their effective date and notice of change shall be sent to the membership.
  
- 8.2 The Board of Directors may render decisions not explicitly covered in these Rules after consulting with the Certification Committee.

2.2 TESTER NEED-TO-KNOW CRITERIA (5-5-23)

**AMERICAN BACKFLOW  
PREVENTION  
ASSOCIATION**

**BACKFLOW PREVENTION  
ASSEMBLY TESTER**

**NEED-TO-KNOW CRITERIA**

This outline was compiled by the American Backflow Prevention Association's Certification Committee. The Certification Committee was assigned the task to develop a national consensus of what a Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester (Tester) needs to know. A job analysis was performed to determine the key tasks performed as a Tester, and what knowledge and skills were needed to perform those tasks.

This outline is offered as a guide to applicants and training providers to identify the knowledge needed to become a backflow prevention assembly tester.

### **TESTER TRAINING INFORMATION**

#### Focus:

The purpose of training is to develop entry level skills and knowledge for a backflow prevention assembly tester. A working knowledge of the causes and principles of backflow and backflow prevention is essential, as well as recognizing proper backflow prevention assembly application, installation, and operation, in addition to a thorough understanding and ability to properly perform accepted field test procedures for all backflow prevention assemblies. Record keeping and program responsibilities are also essential.

#### Student Prerequisites:

The student should have a knowledge of basic hydraulic principles, reading, basic math and mechanical skills are also needed.

#### Student Contribution:

Full attendance at all sessions may be required for satisfactory completion of the training course.

#### Student Evaluation:

Successful completion of written and performance exams.

### **RESOURCE MANUALS:**

The following list of resource manuals is presented for reference purposes only. ABPA does not endorse the use of or preference of one manual over another. The list is presented to show manuals that are commonly used. Resource manuals are periodically updated, be sure to use the most current edition.

CROSS-CONNECTION CONTROL MANUAL - United States Environmental Protection Agency, EPA816-R-03-002 Feb 2003.

RECOMMENDED PRACTICE FOR BACKFLOW PREVENTION AND CROSS CONNECTION CONTROL - M14-Current Edition, American Water Works Association.

MANUAL OF CROSS CONNECTION CONTROL - 10th Edition, University of Southern California, Foundation for Cross-Connection Control & Hydraulic Research.

CROSS CONNECTION CONTROL MANUAL-ACCEPTED PROCEDURE & PRACTICE 6th Edition Pacific Northwest Section AWWA.

BACKFLOW PREVENTION THEORY AND PRACTICE - University of Florida, TREEO Center 1990.

## TESTER NEED TO KNOW CRITERIA

### I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Local Backflow cases and incidents

### II. HYDRAULIC AND BACKFLOW PRINCIPLES

- A. Define and explain :

1. Pressure
  - a. atmospheric
  - b. absolute
  - c. negative
  - d. gauge
  - e. static
  - f. fluctuating
  - g. column of water
  - h. gradient
2. Venturi effect
3. Aspirator effect
4. Backflow
  - a. backpressure
  - b. backsiphonage
5. Cross-Connection
  - a. indirect connection
  - b. direct connection
6. Degree of hazard
  - a. pollutant / non-health hazard
  - b. contaminant / health hazard
7. Service protection
8. Internal protection

### III. THEORY OF BACKFLOW AND CROSS-CONNECTION

- A. Define and explain Hydraulics of water in piping
- B. Define and explain how backflow occurs
- C. Define and explain types of cross connections
- D. Define and explain degree of hazard

### IV. CODES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING A CROSS-CONNECTION CONTROL PROGRAM

- A. Identify and review Federal regulations and codes
- B. Identify and review State regulations and codes
- C. Identify and review local regulations and codes
- D. Identify and Review adopted plumbing code(s)

## V. IDENTIFY AND EXPLAIN RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACTIONS IN A CROSS-CONNECTION CONTROL PROGRAM

- A. Water supplier
- B. Health authority
- C. Plumbing inspector
- D. Tester/contractor
- E. Consumer

## VI. MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT FOR CROSS-CONNECTION CONTROL

- A. Identify different types of backflow preventers
- B. Identify Approval/listing organizations
  1. University of Southern California, Foundation for Cross-Connection Control and Hydraulic Research (USC FCCCHR)
  2. American Society of Sanitary Engineering (ASSE)
  3. International Association of Plumbing & Mechanical Officials (IAPMO)
  4. Canadian Standards Association (CSA)
  5. American Water Works Association (AWWA)
  6. Underwriters Lab/Factory Mutual (UL/FM)
  7. Local
- C. Air Gap
  1. Identify design and operation
  2. Identify application and specific uses
  3. Validate installation requirements
  4. Perform inspection
- D. Atmospheric Vacuum Breaker (AVB)
  1. Identify design and operation
  2. Identify component breakdown
  3. Identify application and specific uses
  4. Validate installation requirements
  5. Perform troubleshooting/diagnostics
  6. Perform inspection
- E. Pressure Vacuum Breaker Assembly (PVB)
  1. Identify design and operation
  2. Identify component breakdown
  3. Identify application and specific uses
  4. Validate installation requirements
  5. Perform field test procedure
  6. Report field test results
  7. Perform troubleshooting/diagnostics

- F. Spill Resistant Pressure Vacuum Breaker Assembly (SVB)
  - 1. Identify design and operation
  - 2. Identify component breakdown
  - 3. Identify application and specific uses
  - 4. Validate installation requirements
  - 5. Perform field test procedure
  - 6. Report field test results
  - 7. Perform troubleshooting/diagnostics
  
- G. Double Check Valve Assembly (DC) and Double Check Detector Assembly (DCDA & DCDA-II)
  - 1. Identify design and operation
  - 2. Identify component breakdown
  - 3. Identify application and specific uses
  - 4. Validate installation requirements
  - 5. Perform field test procedure
  - 6. Report field test results
  - 7. Perform troubleshooting/diagnostics
  
- H. Reduced Pressure Principle Assembly (RP) and Reduced Pressure Detector Assembly (RPDA & RPDA II)
  - 1. Identify design and operation
  - 2. Identify component breakdown
  - 3. Identify application and specific uses
  - 4. Validate installation requirements
  - 5. Perform field test procedures
  - 6. Report field test results
  - 7. Perform troubleshooting/diagnostics
  
- I. Special conditions that can affect operation of backflow prevention assemblies
  - 1. Define hot water
  - 2. Identify thermal expansion
  - 3. Identify pressure fluctuation
  - 4. Identify freezing conditions
  - 5. Identify manifold installations
  - 6. Identify critical services
  - 7. Identify accessibility
  
- J. Identify Other devices/assemblies
  - 1. Non-testable backflow preventers
  - 2. Unapproved/unlisted assemblies
  
- K. Field test equipment
  - 1. Identify different types
  - 2. Submit for periodic check of accuracy
  - 3. Submit for calibration when necessary, or required

L. Tester responsibility

1. Perform tester safety procedures during field test and repair
2. Perform field test report distribution and record keeping
3. Identify educational groups and organizations
4. Identify local cross connection control program

### **2.3.1 FIELD TEST PROCEDURES FOR BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLIES (11/9/21)**

When the ABPA Tester Certification Program was established in 1994, ABPA conducted a review of various field test procedures and adopted the field test procedures that were published in the University of Southern California Foundation for Cross-Connection Control and Hydraulic Research's (USC-FCCCHR) Manual of Cross-Connection Control 9<sup>th</sup> Edition (identified as the ABPA 2.24.98 field test procedures).

On October 4, 2009 the American Backflow Prevention Association (ABPA) Board of Directors approved the Certification Committee's recommendation to update the field test procedures used in their Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification Program. These field test procedures are published in the USC-FCCCHR Manual of Cross-Connection Control 10<sup>th</sup> Edition (identified as the ABPA 1.1.11 field test procedures).

**2.4 BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY TESTER CERTIFICATION EXAM  
REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS (5-5-23)**

The current Tester examination registration instructions, exam calendar, and fee schedule may be found on the ABPA website.

[https://www.abpa.org/page/Tester\\_Cert](https://www.abpa.org/page/Tester_Cert)

## **2.5 CODE OF CONDUCT – (5-5-23)**

The Code of Conduct establishes and requires basic professional behavior standards for all parties present at ABPA certification examinations.

All parties are obligated to maintain professional behavior at all times at the examination site(s). This includes maintaining and demonstrating appropriate behavior, and respecting all parties rights (i.e., applicants, Exam Monitor and Proctors) at the examination site(s). All parties shall refrain from public behavior that is a violation of professional or ethical standards.

1. All parties present at the examination site shall follow all ABPA policies, procedures, and rules, which includes a responsibility to be aware of and understand the policies, procedures, and rules.
2. All examination information must be kept confidential. No part of the examination materials may be shared, copied, reproduced, or removed from the examination site.
3. During the exam, individuals shall refrain from aggressive or hostile behavior towards any individual.

Applicants violating any of the above policies will be asked by the Exam Monitor to leave the examination site.

### **Disciplinary Actions:**

#### Applicant

Any evidence of failure to comply with Code of Conduct during the examinations will cause the Applicant, at a minimum, to forfeit the right to finish their examination(s). They will be asked to leave the examination site and will have to reapply according to the Rules.

Any evidence of creating a hostile environment at the examination site will cause the Applicant to suspend their right to retake the exam for a period of 90 days. At which time they will have to reapply according to the Rules. Any threats or physical contact against other parties may result in a permanent ban from reapplying for ABPA Certification.

#### Exam Monitor / Proctor

Shall be handled by the Association.

### 3.1 SCHEDULING OF CERTIFICATION EXAMINATIONS – (5-5-23)

Scheduling of Certification Examinations  
for  
Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester

The ABPA has established an examination protocol to ensure all examinations are administered uniformly and conducted in a comprehensive manner. This protocol is in effect anytime an ABPA examination is administered. ABPA schedules certification examinations as needed, and the requirements for requesting an examination are listed below. This is intended to help clarify the procedures for requesting ABPA to administer certification examinations.

1. **A Prospective Exam Notification Form** (see Section 3.5 of *Tester Operation and Procedures Manual*) must be filled out completely and submitted to ABPA at least sixty (60) days prior to each requested examination date.
2. Proposed examination site must comply with the ABPA **Examination Location Requirements** (see Section 3.2 of *Tester Operations and Procedures Manual*)
3. ABPA will acknowledge the receipt of the Prospective Exam Notification Form(s) via email. This is not a confirmation that the exam date has been scheduled.
4. ABPA will initiate review of the examination request.
  - a. ABPA must determine the availability of proper personnel (i.e., ABPA proctors and exam monitors) to staff the exam BEFORE the exam request can be approved. If there is more than one exam requested on the same day and in the same general area, this may cause problems with scheduling personnel.
  - b. When the exam location is remote or located in an area where ABPA has fewer local proctors and exam monitors to choose from, it may take additional time to approve. ABPA will always endeavor to approve exams as soon as possible. Please understand there are circumstances beyond ABPA's control that may cause ABPA to deny an exam request.
  - c. Training Providers: If a training provider requests a closed exam (i.e., only applicants from the training event), an unique exam registration web-link will be provided, so that only applicants from the training event can register for the ABPA examination. A scheduled exam that is a closed exam, will not be posted on the ABPA website. If the exam is open (i.e., applicants not enrolled in training event may be scheduled), the exam request must include the total number of applicants the site can accommodate. Open exams will be posted on the ABPA website.
  - d. Request for examinations requiring travel outside the contiguous United States, please see **Travel Policy Outside Contiguous United States** (see Section 3.4 of *Tester Operation and Procedures Manual*)
5. Once ABPA has verified that the examination request can be approved, the requesting party will be notified in writing.

### **3.2 BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY TESTER EXAM LOCATION REQUIREMENTS (4-29-22)**

The ABPA has established an exam protocol to ensure all exams are administered uniformly and conducted in a comprehensive manner. This protocol is in effect anytime an ABPA exam is administered, and the requirements listed below must be followed.

ABPA will appoint an exam monitor and proctor(s) to be on site during the exam process. The exam monitor will be in charge of the on-site exam protocol and will be the person to determine that all on-site requirements are being met.

If you wish to have ABPA administer an exam at your location, please make sure all location and exam requirements can be met, then go to the ABPA website and complete a Prospective Exam Notification Form. ABPA will review this request to determine if the exam can be administered at the requested location and date.

The number of allowable ABPA applicants at a location is normally determined by the number of performance exam stations, with at least one performance exam station for every five (5) applicants.

#### **3.2.1 LOCATION REQUIREMENTS**

Location must have adequate parking to accommodate the expected number of applicants and ABPA personnel (i.e., Exam Monitor and Proctor(s)).

Location must have adequate restroom facilities to accommodate the expected number of applicants, as well as ABPA personnel.

Location must comply with ADA requirements to provide proper access for those with disabilities.

#### **3.2.2 WRITTEN EXAM AREA REQUIREMENTS**

The written exam area must be dedicated for the entire 3-hour allowable written exam time limit and must be quiet with no outside distractions.

The written exam area must have comfortable ventilation, lighting, and temperature.

Adequate seating and spacing for applicants to allow for individual confidentiality and any health concern requirements in effect. If this can not be met, then dividers/partitions must be provided.

Clock visually available to all written exam attendees

#### **3.2.3 HOLDING/WAITING AREA**

A holding/waiting area must be available for applicants that have completed the written exam and are waiting for the next available proctor to conduct the performance exam.,

Holding/waiting area must be separate from the written exam area and performance exam area.

Applicants must not be able to view the performance exam area from the holding/waiting area.

### **3.2.4 PERFORMANCE EXAM AREA REQUIREMENTS**

Dedicated space for exam applicants and proctors for the entire performance exam and must be quiet with no outside distractions.

The performance exam area must have comfortable ventilation, lighting, and temperature.

Adequate spacing between individual test stations shall be provided to reduce possible interference and to ensure confidentiality during the performance exam. If this can not be met, then dividers/partitions must be provided.

One test station containing all four (4) assemblies for each exam proctor with means of simulating the following conditions on each assembly. Simulations may be accomplished by external bypasses, simulators, or removing internal components.

#### **RP:**

Failing 1st check valve

Failing 2nd check valve

Malfunctioning differential pressure relief valve

Leaking #2 shut-off valve (direction of flow and backpressure)

Proper operating assembly

#### **DC:**

Failing 1st check valve

Failing 2nd check valve

Leaking #1 shut-off valve

Leaking #2 shut-off valve (direction of flow and backpressure)

Proper operating assembly

#### **PVB:**

Failing check valve

Leaking #1 shut-off valve

Leaking #2 shut-off valve

Malfunctioning air inlet valve

Proper operating assembly

#### **SVB:**

Failing check valve

Leaking #1 shut-off valve

Leaking #2 shut-off valve

Malfunctioning air inlet valve

Proper operating assembly

NOTE: Possible availability of field test kits, equipment and hand tools from the training provider for applicants completing ABPA Tester certification examination immediately following their training class.

**3.3 LIMITED ACCESS EXAMINATION ARRANGEMENTS (11/9/21)**

## Limited Access Examination Arrangements

Limited Access Examination arrangements may be coordinated by the ABPA if any of the following criteria is satisfied.

- No local or experienced (i.e., shall have acted as Examination Monitor in last 12 months) Examination Monitor available
- Remote Examination Site - Proctor must travel more than 200 miles round trip.
- Minimum # of Applicants – Less than ten (10) applicants
- Limited Ground Transportation

Proctor travel reimbursement: Administrator may authorize expenditure of not to exceed two (2) times the application fees collected for the specific exam being administered. - Final authorization required by Treasurer.

Reference ABPA travel policy (requires Executive Committee approval)  
The Executive Committee must approve expenditures exceeding this amount.

**3.4 EXAMINATION MONITOR / PROCTOR TRAVEL POLICY OUTSIDE THE CONTIGUOUS UNITED STATES (4/29/22)**

When ABPA agrees to conduct a certification examination outside of the contiguous United States (US), the following requirements apply:

1. All rules and policies regarding examinations and applications must be followed.
2. The Requestor of the Exam shall reimburse ABPA of proctor travel expenses per ABPA Travel Policy.
  - a. Air Fare expenses must be reimbursed to ABPA prior to the exam date.
  - b. Accommodations and on-site expenses must be reimbursed no more than 30 days after the exam.
3. All travel arrangements and accommodations will be reviewed and approved by ABPA.
4. ABPA will follow “best practices” to keep costs reasonable as possible.

**3.5 Prospective Examination Date Notification Form (11-9-21)**

**American Backflow Prevention Association**  
**Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification Program**  
*Prospective Examination Date Notification (11-9-21)*

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**INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Please Type or print legibly.
2. Request for a Prospective Exam must be submitted to ABPA at least 60 days before the requested examination date. ABPA will provide a confirmation of receipt of this request.
3. The Prospective Examination Requester must use this form in order to request an ABPA examination date. This form will

- initiate a review to determine if ABPA can administer a certification examination on a particular date(s) and location(s). If the ABPA examination can be coordinated for the requested date(s) and location(s), the Association will confirm in writing. If the date and location cannot be scheduled, then the Association will notify the requester.
4. If this date/location has restricted access, please select appropriate

- box below \*. Otherwise, Association may schedule other applicants.
5. Upon completion, mail or email the completed application to the ABPA.

All communication with regard to the certification program shall be directed to the ABPA at:

*American Backflow Prevention Association Certification Program  
 Email: certification.abpa.org*

Proposed Date(s) and Location(s) for Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Examination

	<b>Written Examination</b>		<b>Performance Examination</b>
Date	_____		_____
	a.m. <input type="checkbox"/>	a.m. <input type="checkbox"/>	a.m. <input type="checkbox"/>
Time	_____ p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> to _____ p.m. <input type="checkbox"/>		_____ p.m. <input type="checkbox"/> to _____ p.m. <input type="checkbox"/>
Location	_____ _____ _____		_____ _____ _____
Instructor(s) of Record	_____		Number of Applicants _____
Phone _____ Fax _____			Email _____
<input type="checkbox"/> * Examination is open to all ABPA Tester Applicants			<input type="checkbox"/> * Examination is closed to outside ABPA Tester Applicants

**NOTE: Examination Monitor and Proctors will be assigned by the Association**

*Official Use Only*

Received \_\_\_\_\_ Approved \_\_\_\_\_ Number of Applicants \_\_\_\_\_

Examination scheduled for:

Date(s) & Time(s) Requested above Location \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_ a.m.  p.m.

Number of proctors assigned: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE: Any change of date or location requires a minimum notice of 30 days.  
 Any change in the number of applicants, or cancellation of exam must be received by the Association at least 14 calendar days ahead of time.**

**3.7.1 WRITTEN EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINES (5-5-23)**WRITTEN EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION  
GUIDELINES

1. WRITTEN EXAMINATION SITE
  - 1.1 Examination site shall provide adequate seating space to have an empty space on each side of an applicant. This is to ensure confidentiality of examination results. *(See Tester Exam Location Requirements – Section 3.1 of Tester Operation and Procedures Manual)*
  - 1.2 The Association shall notify the Examination Monitor of the number of applicants at least seven (7) days prior to the examination date.
2. ADMINISTRATION
  - 2.1 The applicant shall provide government issued photo identification (i.e., Drivers license, passport, etc.) and confirmation letter from ABPA in order to gain admittance to the examination.
  - 2.2 Applicants arriving more than thirty (30) minutes after the scheduled examination start time may result in denied access to the examination, and forfeiture of the their examination fee.
  - 2.3 The written examination shall be a closed-book type and shall be administered by the Association.
  - 2.4 The written examination shall be administered by an Examination Monitor appointed by the Association. The Examination Monitor shall not be the instructor of the class or group taking the examination.
  - 2.5 Training aids, reference books, cell phones, personal electronic equipment, etc. shall not be permitted in the examination area. The applicant shall complete the examination without help from any source. A simple numeric self-powered calculator may be permitted in the examination area.
  - 2.6 Prior to starting the written examination, the Examination Monitor shall instruct the applicant to read the written examination instructions, then the applicant must print and sign their name, and date the written examination instructions. Applicant shall have three (3) hours to complete the written examination.
  - 2.7 Any applicant not in compliance with these guidelines shall forfeit the right to finish the written examination and will have to re-apply according to the Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification Rules.
  - 2.8 Should the applicant have a disability that restricts their ability to take the written examination under standard conditions, the applicant may request special testing arrangements. The applicant's request must have accompanied their application, and have been approved by ABPA prior to the exam.

3. COMPLETION

- 3.1 The written examination may be graded on site by the Examination Monitor.
- 3.2 A grade of seventy percent (70%) or greater shall be required for successful completion of the written examination.
- 3.3 Once the written examination is completed the Examination Monitor shall record the written examination scores on the applicant score sheet.
- 3.4 The written examination shall be collected and returned to ABPA by the Examination Monitor within five (5) business days.

**3.7.1.1 PROCEDURE FOR ADMINISTERING ORAL WRITTEN EXAM (11-10-21)****ABPA TESTER AND SPECIALIST CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS  
PROCEDURE FOR ADMINISTERING AN ORAL WRITTEN EXAMINATION**

An ABPA Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester or Cross-Connection Control Specialist applicant may request reasonable examination accommodations based upon their specific request, specific disability, and documentation submitted. Request shall accompany the application.

If the request is approved, the Association shall designate appropriate staff (Association's representative) to assist in the administration of the oral written examination for each applicant.

The oral written examination shall be held in an area which will limit distractions.

The Association's representative administering the oral examination shall be provided with a separate copy of the written examination in addition to the applicant's copy. Each person shall sign and date the cover of each written examinations (i.e., applicant's and proctor's copy) for documentation. The Association's representative shall also record the start and finish time on the cover of their written exam.

The Association's representative administering the oral examination shall read each question out loud as written. After reading each question, the Association's representative shall pause. If necessary, the question may be repeated to the applicant.

Then, the Association's representative shall read each answer with a reasonable pause between each.

The applicant shall mark their answer sheet.

No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked by the applicant in the examination area before, during, or after the examination. The Association's representative shall not answer any questions about the content of the examination. The Association's representative shall not interpret or explain any information on the examination.

The time allowed for an oral examination shall be a maximum of 4.5 hours.

Upon completion, the written examination shall be scored in accordance with the ABPA written examination administration guidelines.

**Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Applicant Only:** The applicant shall complete the performance examination in accordance with the ABPA Rules and procedures.

**3.7.2 WRITTEN EXAMINATION INSTRUCTIONS (5-5-23)**AMERICAN BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSOCIATION  
BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY TESTER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

## WRITTEN EXAMINATION INSTRUCTIONS

(TO BE READ AND SIGNED BY APPLICANT)

1. The only items you may have at the examination site is a pencil, simple 4-function numeric self-powered calculator, and your written examination. The written examination shall be completed by yourself without help from any source.
2. Your exam booklet may be used as scratch paper.
3. Should you need to use the restroom, bring your entire exam, calculator and scratch paper to the Examination Monitor's desk. Only one person at a time shall be permitted to leave the room. You may pick up your examination items when you return to the room.
4. Please print your name, the date, the exam number, and the exam location where requested on the answer sheet.
5. Answer the multiple-choice questions on the answer sheet provided. Fill in the block that has the same letter/number as the answer you have chosen, making a dark, heavy mark. Seventy percent (70%) or greater is required for successful completion of the written examination.
6. Any evidence of impropriety will result in the immediate termination of the written examination, and you will be requested to leave the examination site. You will be required to submit a new application and fee per the Rules for rescheduling of your examination.
7. You are obligated to maintain professional behavior at all times at the examination site. This includes maintaining and demonstrating high standards of integrity and respecting all parties at the examination site. Any violation of this policy will result in the immediate termination of the exam, and you will be requested to leave the examination site.
8. You have three (3) hours to complete the written examination.

I have read and understood the above  
Written Examination Instructions.

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### **3.7.5 WRITTEN EXAMINATION DEVELOPMENT & VALIDATION PROCEDURE (11-9-21)**

The ABPA voluntary Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification Program requires the applicant to successfully complete a written and performance examination. The required knowledge is based on the Need-to-Know Criteria, as established by the ABPA Certification Committee, for the backflow prevention assembly tester. The Need-to-Know job analysis was conducted by Certification Committee subject matter experts. Each item in the Need-to-Know was verified as a function critical to the performance of the Tester. The Certification Committee came to a consensus and voted to accept each item in the Need-to-Know Criteria. Then based upon the specific subject matter categories or sections, a general weighting of importance was established.

The written examination is based on the six (6) sections of this Need-to-Know Criteria. Each section of the Need-to-Know Criteria is weighted as to its importance (i.e., relevancy and critical component of Tester's task) and more questions are asked on the more important sections. A 100-question multiple choice written examination is based on the percentages of the weighting of each section. The written examination bank of questions contains approximately 400 questions, from which ABPA randomly draws 100 questions for each version of the examination. Each version of the written examination maintains the same weighting from the Need-to-Know Criteria. There is a routine cycling of different written examination questions from the examination bank, and the manipulation of the location of the correct answer among the incorrect alternate responses.

The written examination is administered to the applicant by an Examination Monitor assigned by ABPA. The Examination Monitor must administer the closed book written examination according to the rules and procedures of the program. When examinations are administered, the Examination Monitor cannot be associated with the instructor of the class or training provider to assure neutrality. (See Section 2.3 - Written Exam Administration Guidelines) The written examination(s) is delivered via traceable means (i.e., UPS, FedEx, etc.) from ABPA to the Examination Monitor in a sealed envelope so that the written examination is not seen by anyone before the examination is administered. Each examination booklet also carries a security seal on the edge of the examination that is only broken by the applicant taking the written examination. Once the applicant has completed the written examination it is returned to the Examination Monitor. Once graded, the applicant is informed if they passed or failed. All graded and unused written examinations are returned via traceable means by the Examination Monitor in a sealed envelope to ABPA. To maintain the security and validity of the written examination, the chain of custody of the written examination is controlled from ABPA to the Examination Monitor to the Applicant, and back to ABPA. All permanent records are maintained by the National Office of ABPA.

The ABPA Certification Committee maintains the bank of written examination questions. This Committee is given the task to develop and maintain the Need-to-Know Criteria, the weighting of the sections of the criteria, and the questions that properly reflect the required knowledge. ABPA reviews all used and unused written and performance examinations when returned from the Examination Monitors. Written examination questions used in the written examination are routinely analyzed to determine if there was an inordinate amount of responses (i.e., passes or failures) on any one question. The ABPA continuously monitors the pass/fail data and refers all documentation to the Certification Committee.

The Certification Committee reviews question failure data to assure the question is valid. Questions may be failed because the concept is not adequately taught by training providers, or the applicant doesn't understand the concept(s), or the question may not be written clearly. ABPA does not involve itself in the training of an applicant. ABPA only administers their voluntary certification program. To assure all written examination questions remain valid, the Certification Committee will review the applicant response data. Question statistics are presented to the Certification Committee at their regular committee meeting during the ABPA Annual Conference. If any question presents an inordinately high failure rate, or passing rate, the Committee will review those questions immediately. If there is no inordinately high failure rate, then the Committee will organize a question validation meeting at least every three (3) years. The purpose of the validation meeting is to assure all questions properly test the knowledge of a concept, idea, or skill it is designed to cover in the Need-to-Know Criteria. Each question in the examination bank is reviewed at the validation meeting. Each question is reviewed for the following criteria:

1. Verify that each question represents a specific section of the ABPA Need to Know Criteria.
2. Verify that each question is assigned to the correct section of the Need to Know Criteria.
3. Verify that the question poses a complete question, or those that are not complete questions, verify that all responses are grammatically and logically consistent with the question.
4. Verify that the answer is correct, and all other responses are incorrect. Each question is a four (4) multiple-choice answer format.
5. Review the failure statistics of the individual question and rate the difficulty of the question; easy, medium, hard.
6. Identify location of answers in the suggested reference sources as listed in the ABPA Need to Know Criteria.
7. Determine the cut-score (differentiates between those who pass and those who fail) for each question.

The validation meeting is held in a closed Committee Meeting. Only Certification Committee members are allowed to see the questions in the exam bank. Once the validation meeting is over all recommended changes to the individual questions will be made. A simple majority of the Committee is needed to change or alter a question or answer.

### 3.8.1 **PERFORMANCE EXAMINATION ADMINISTRATION GUIDELINES** **(5-5-23)**

#### 1. PERFORMANCE EXAMINATION TEST SITE

- 1.1 ABPA shall notify the Examination Monitor of the number of applicants at least 14 days prior to the performance examination date.
- 1.2 The Examination Monitor shall be assisted by the Proctors recruited by ABPA from the area contiguous to the examination site.
- 1.3 Provisions at the performance examination site shall be made to provide at least one test station per Proctor. A Test Station shall consist of a means for testing at least one Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Prevention Assembly (RP), one Double Check Valve Assembly (DC), one Spill Resistant Pressure Vacuum Breaker (SVB) and one Pressure Vacuum Breaker (PVB). (*See Tester Exam Location Requirements – Section 3.1*)
- 1.4 Each assembly in a test station shall provide the means for simulating all malfunctions of the following:
  - 1.4.1 RP: 1st and 2nd check valves, differential pressure relief valve, and #2 shut-off valve.
  - 1.4.2 DC: 1st and 2nd check valves, #1 & #2 shut-off valves.
  - 1.4.3 PVB: Check valve, #1 & #2 shut-off valve and air inlet valve.
  - 1.4.4 SVB: Check valve, #1 & #2 shut-off valve and air inlet valve.
- 1.5 Adequate space between individual test stations shall be provided to reduce possible interference and to ensure confidentiality of examination results.

#### 2. ADMINISTRATION

- 2.1 Applicant shall provide proper field test gage equipment and hand tools. An exception may be provided if applicant is being examined upon completion of a course of instruction. In this instance, on site field test equipment may be used by the applicant.
- 2.2 During the performance examination only one proctor per applicant shall be present at each test station.

- 2.3 The following relationships may be also considered a potential conflict of interest (i.e., a private or personal interest sufficient to influence or appear to influence the objective exercise of official duties) and need to be avoided in the administration of the Tester examination process:

Instructor of Record\* vs Performance Exam Proctor  
Instructor of Record vs Examination Monitor  
Training Provider\*\* vs Examination Monitor  
Performance Exam Proctor vs Tester Applicant

\* Instructor(s) of Record – individual(s) that conducts the majority of the training course instruction.

\*\* Training Provider - Entity that solicits, coordinates, and/or provides backflow prevention assembly tester training.

- 2.4 The applicant shall read and sign the Performance Examination Instructions. No questions from the applicant shall be allowed which would impact the outcome of the performance examination. Proctor shall refrain from any direct or indirect assistance with the performance examination.
- 2.5 The applicant shall provide the field test results on the ABPA Performance Examination Test Form provided by the Proctor. The Proctor shall grade the applicant's field test procedure and recorded results on the reverse side of the form.
- 2.6 No strict time limit is placed on the applicant to complete the performance examination, but a general guideline would limit the time required to complete the performance examination to one hour. This is at the discretion of the proctor. More time may be allowed providing that the applicant is making active progress.
- 2.7 The Proctor shall simulate {Simulation may be accomplished by the removal of internal components (i.e., springs, check valves, etc.) or by external bypasses attached to the assembly} one of the following respective conditions in each of the assemblies under test.

RP:

Failing/Leaking 1st check valve

Leaking 2nd check valve

Malfunctioning differential pressure relief valve

Leaking #2 shut-off valve (direction of flow, backpressure)

Proper operating assembly

DC:

Failing/Leaking 1st check valve

Failing/Leaking 2nd check valve

Leaking #1 shut-off valve

Leaking #2 shut-off valve

Proper operating assembly

PVB:

Failing/Leaking check valve

Leaking #1 shut-off valve

Leaking #2 shut-off valve

Malfunctioning air inlet

Proper operating assembly

SVB:

Failing/Leaking check valve

Leaking #1 shut-off valve

Leaking #2 shut-off valve

Malfunctioning air inlet

Proper operating assembly

## 2.8 PASS/FAIL CRITERIA

- 2.8.1 If the applicant makes an error(s) (*An error is an action that could effect the outcome of the field test procedure*) in the field test procedure or recording of the results and is unaware of the error(s), the Proctor shall let the applicant proceed to the completion of the assembly field test (*i.e., submission of the Performance Examination Form*) then advise the applicant (*by stating to the applicant: "You have erred in your procedure"*) that an error(s) has been committed and the applicant is free to start the procedure again. If the applicant makes an error(s) a second time, then the Proctor shall let the applicant proceed to the completion of the field test. The proctor will terminate the performance examination and explain the error(s) to the applicant.
- 2.8.2 If the applicant performs the field test procedure properly, and reports results properly during the first or second attempt, then the applicant shall be allowed to proceed with the performance exam without penalty.

### 3. RECORDING OF RESULTS BY PROCTOR

- 3.1 Applicant shall signify their completion of the performance examination of each assembly by submitting the Performance Examination Test Form to the proctor.
- 3.2 Proctor shall verify if the field test data is accurate, and represents the condition of the assembly being field tested.
- 3.3 Proctor shall record the assessment of the applicant's performance examination on the Proctor's side of the Performance Examination Test Form, including the Proctor's printed name, signature, and date. Applicant's performance shall be recorded as Pass or Fail (including detailed cause of failure).
- 3.3 At the completion of each assembly the Proctor shall inform applicant that they have passed or failed.
  - 3.3.1 PASS: If the applicant successfully completes the field test and reporting results, they shall proceed to the next assembly. Once all four (4) assemblies have been successfully field tested, then the Performance Examination has been successfully completed.
  - 3.3.2 FAIL: If the applicant errs a second time on an assembly field test and reporting results, then the Performance Examination shall be terminated. The proctor shall explain the cause of failure.

### 4. DOCUMENTATION

- 4.1 Proctor shall provide all completed Performance Examination Test Forms to Examination Monitor
- 4.2 Proctor shall complete the Applicant Score Sheet (*See Scoresheet – Section 3.7.4*) for each applicant tested, including:
  - Circle Pass (P) or Fail (F) for each assembly tested
  - Indicate if simulation was used - ✕ or ✓
  - Record “Pass” or “Fail” on the performance examination column
  - Proctor's initials
- 4.3 The Examination Monitor shall return all examination materials and documentation to the ABPA within five (5) business days

3.8.2 PERFORMANCE EXAM INSTRUCTIONS (5-5-23)

AMERICAN BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSOCIATION  
 BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY TESTER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

*PERFORMANCE EXAMINATION INSTRUCTIONS*

(To be read and signed by applicant)

1. The only items you may have with you during the performance examination is your field test kit and hand tools. The examination must be completed by yourself without help from any source.
2. You will be required to evaluate one Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Prevention Assembly (RP), one Double Check Valve Assembly (DC), one Spill Resistant Pressure Vacuum Breaker (SVB) and one Pressure Vacuum Breaker (PVB) per the ABPA 1.1.11 (USC 10<sup>th</sup> edition) field test procedures. You will not be allowed to refer to training aids during the performance examination.
3. For each of the four assemblies, please fill out a separate Performance Examination Form. On each form, please sign and print your name and date BEFORE starting your field test procedure.
4. Should you feel that there is a potential conflict of interest between you and your proctor(s), you have the right to request a different performance examination proctor BEFORE starting your performance exam. A conflict of interest is defined as a private or personal interest sufficient to influence or appear to influence the objective exercise of the proctor's official duties.
5. You have approximately one (1) hour to complete the performance examination. As necessary, explain your actions as you are performing the field test procedures.
6. Please indicate that you have completed the performance examination by handing the Performance Examination Form to the Proctor. You shall correctly complete all aspects of the field test procedure in order to pass.
7. If you make an error(s) during your field test procedure (*including the reporting of your results*), and are unaware of the error(s), the proctor shall let you proceed to the completion of the field test. The proctor will then inform you that you have erred in your procedure, and you are then free to start the procedure again. If you make an error(s) during the second attempt, the proctor shall let you proceed to the completion of the field test, then the proctor will stop the performance exam and explain the error(s).
8. Any evidence of impropriety will result in the immediate termination of the performance examination, and you will be requested to leave the examination site. You will be required to submit a new application and fee per the Rules for re-scheduling of your examination.
9. You are obligated to maintain professional behavior at all times at the examination site. This includes maintaining and demonstrating high standards of integrity and respecting all parties at the examination site. Any violation of this policy will result in the immediate termination of the exam, and you will be requested to leave the examination site.
10. Should you have any questions regarding the above instructions, ask the Proctor or Examination Monitor for clarification before signing this form

<i>I have read and understood the above Performance Examination Instructions</i>	
Print Name	_____
Signature	_____
Date	_____

**4.1.1 PROCTOR QUALIFICATIONS (5-5-23)**

AMERICAN BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSOCIATION  
Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester  
Proctor Qualifications

**1.0 PROCTOR APPLICANTS**

- 1.1 Applicant shall submit the proctor application to ABPA.
- 1.2 To be considered for proctor status, applicant shall comply with the following:
  - 1.2.1 Shall possess a current American Backflow Prevention Association Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification, and
  - 1.2.2 Should have successfully completed a minimum of one ABPA tester re-certification, and
  - 1.2.3 Shall successfully complete a proctor training program.
  - 1.2.4 ABPA shall review proctor application

**2.0 MAINTAINING PROCTOR STATUS**

- 2.1 To maintain proctor status, proctor shall comply with the following:
  - 2.1.1 Shall possess current ABPA Tester Certification, and
  - 2.1.2 Should have acted as an ABPA proctor a minimum of two (2) times per year, and
  - 2.1.3 Shall successfully complete proctor training program every three (3) years.
- 2.2 A Proctor shall not act as proctor on the same day and location as their Tester recertification examination.
- 2.3 A Proctor that fails their Tester recertification examination shall not act as proctor until successfully completing their Tester recertification examination.

**3.0 PROCTOR TRAINING PROGRAM**

- 3.1 Training program shall consist of a detailed review of the following:
  - 3.1.1 Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Rules  
All aspects of the Rules shall be reviewed.
  - 3.1.2 Performance Examination Test Form.
    - a. Review format of form
    - b. Review areas which applicant completes
    - c. Review areas which proctor completes
  - 3.1.3 Performance examination test site.
    - a. Provisions at the performance examination site shall be made to provide at least one test station per Proctor. A test station shall consist of a means for field testing at least one Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Prevention Assembly (RP), one Double Check Valve

Assembly (DC), one Spill Resistant Pressure Vacuum Breaker (SVB) and one Pressure Vacuum Breaker (PVB).

- b. Each assembly in a test station shall provide the means for simulating \* all of the following malfunctions:
- RP: 1st and 2nd check valves, differential pressure relief valve, #2 shut-off valve.
  - DC: 1st and 2nd check valves, #1 and #2 shut-off valves.
  - PVB: Check valve, #1 and #2 shut-off valves and air inlet valve.
  - SVB: Check valve, #1 and #2 shut-off valves and air inlet valve.

\* *Simulation may be accomplished by the removal of internal components (i.e., springs, check valves, etc.) or by external bypasses attached to the assembly.*

- c. Adequate space between individual test stations shall be provided to reduce possible interference and to ensure confidentiality of examination results.

#### 3.1.4 Performance examination

- a. During the performance examination, only one proctor per applicant shall be present at each test station.
- b. Proctor shall explain the parameters of the performance examination to the applicant. No questions from the applicant shall be allowed which would impact the outcome of the performance examination. Proctor shall refrain from any direct or indirect assistance with the performance examination.
- c. No strict time limit is placed on the applicant to complete the performance examination, but a general guideline would limit the time required to complete the performance examination to one (1) hour. This at the discretion of the proctor. More time may be allowed providing that the applicant is making active progress.
- d. Proctor shall simulate one of the following respective conditions in each of the assemblies under test:
- RP:
    - Failing/Leaking 1st check valve,
    - Leaking 2nd check valve,
    - Malfunctioning differential pressure relief valve,
    - Leaking #2 shut-off valve (direction of flow and backpressure).
    - Proper operating assembly

DC

Failing/Leaking 1st check valve

Failing/Leaking 2nd check valve

Leaking #1 shut-off valve

Leaking #2 shut-off valve (direction of flow and backpressure)

Proper operating assembly

PVB:

Failing/Leaking check valve

Leaking #1 shut-off valve

Leaking #2 shut-off valve

Malfunctioning air inlet valve

Proper operating assembly

SVB:

Failing/Leaking check valve

Leaking #1 shut-off valve

Leaking #2 shut-off valve

Malfunctioning air inlet valve

Proper operating assembly

#### 3.1.5 Pass/fail criteria

- a. Applicant shall signify their completion of the performance examination by submitting the Performance Examination Test Form to the Proctor.
- b. Proctor shall verify the field test data as accurate, and representing the condition of the assembly being field tested.
- c. At the completion of the performance examination, the proctor shall verify that all aspects of the performance examination have been successfully completed. Proctor shall then inform the applicant that they have passed or failed. If applicant fails, the proctor shall explain the cause for failure.

### 3.2 PROCTOR EXAMINATION

#### 3.2.1 At the completion of Section 3.1 the proctor trainee shall be examined as follows:

- a. Proctor Trainee shall observe a mock performance examination. During this mock examination, the person performing the field test procedures shall make deliberate errors in the field test procedure and recording of data. The proctor trainee shall identify all errors and record them on a performance examination report form.
- b. For successful completion of the Proctor Training Program, the Proctor Trainee shall identify any and all errors made by the person performing the field test procedures, and record them accurately on the performance examination report form.

#### 4.0 EXAMINATION MONITOR

4.1 The Examination Monitor shall be in charge of the examination at the examination site. The Examination Monitor shall meet the requirements of the Association's Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Proctor Qualifications. At the option of ABPA the written examination may be administered by a person who does not meet the Association's Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Proctor Qualifications.

#### 4.2 Examination Monitor Qualifications

- 4.2.1 To be considered for Examination Monitor status, applicant shall comply with the following:
- a. Shall possess a current American Backflow Prevention Association Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification, and
  - b. Shall possess a current American Backflow Prevention Association Proctor status, and
  - c. Should have successfully completed a minimum of one ABPA Proctor renewal.

#### 4.3 Examination Monitor responsibilities.

- 4.3.1 Examination Monitor shall be responsible for reviewing test site location prior to the start of the examination to confirm compliance with *Tester Operation & Procedures Manual, Section 3.1.3 Tester Exam Location Requirements*.
- 4.3.2 Examination Monitor shall assure the written examination administration guidelines are complied with.
- 4.3.3 Examination monitor shall be responsible for handling all on-site appeals.
- 4.3.4 Examination monitor shall oversee the performance examination to assure all administration guidelines are complied with.
- 4.3.5 Examination Monitor may coordinate with ABPA in the selection of proctors.
- 4.3.6 Examination Monitor may act as a proctor.
- 4.3.7 Shall review performance of Proctors as per Sections 3.1.4 and 3.1.5 of these qualifications, and report to ABPA.

#### 5.0 REVOCATION

5.1 Proctor status or Examination Monitor status may be rescinded for cause at any time by the Administrator and/or the Certification Committee.

**4.1.2 PROCTOR TRAINING COURSE CRITERIA (2-5-23)****4.1.2.1 SCHEDULING:**

Proctor Qualification Training Courses may be held in conjunction with National and Regional Conferences. Training courses may be in-person or virtual.

Additional courses shall be considered on a case-by-case basis depending upon the following:

1. Minimum of 10 applicants in attendance; or
2. Minimum of 100 ABPA testers in the surrounding area (i.e., ~100 miles); or
3. Travel expenses for the Proctor Trainer(s) are provided.

Written notice to ABPA requesting a proctor training course should be submitted in advance to allow for adequate logistical arrangement.

**4.1.2.2 LOCATION:**

The location for the course shall include provisions for classroom seating along with standard classroom amenities and provisions for a mock performance examination test site as follows:

Mock performance examination site.

- a. Provisions at the performance examination site shall be made to present the mock performance examination video in person or virtually.
- b. Adequate space between individual seating shall be provided to reduce possible interference and to ensure confidentiality of examination results and to allow for adequate viewing of the mock exam.
- c. For virtual sessions, location must have adequate internet bandwidth and computer support for transmission of mock exam video, as well as camera feed from training site.

**4.1.2.3 INSTRUCTION:**

A minimum of one Proctor-Trainer shall conduct each Proctor Qualification Training Course. If two Proctor Trainers are used; one of those individuals may be a Proctor Trainer Applicant.

**4.1.2.4 COURSE OUTLINE:**

- a. New Proctors – shall be a minimum of 6 hours and include:
  - i. Review Operation of Certification Program
    1. Rules Governing the Program
    2. Need-to-Know Criteria
  - ii. Review Proctor Training Material
    1. Rules

2. Proctor Qualifications
  3. Administration Guidelines – Written & Performance
  4. Examination Instructions – Written & Performance
  5. Performance Examination Test Forms
- iii. Performance Examination
    1. Hand out practice Performance Test Forms
    2. Review common applicant errors
    3. Proctoring Techniques
  - iv. Mock Performance Examination
    1. DC
    2. RP
    3. PVB
    4. SVB
- b. Renewal of Proctors – shall be a minimum of 6 hours and include:
- i. Update Changes to Operation of Certification Program
    1. Rules Governing the Program
    2. Need-to-Know Criteria
  - ii. Update Changes to Review Proctor Training Material
    1. Rules
    2. Proctor Qualifications
    3. Administration Guidelines – Written & Performance
    4. Examination Instructions – Written & Performance
    5. Performance Examination Test Forms
  - iii. Performance Examination
    1. Hand out practice Performance Test Forms
    2. Review common applicant errors
    3. Proctoring Techniques
  - iv. Mock Performance Examination
    1. DC
    2. RP
    3. PVB
    4. SVB

## **5.0 MOCK PERFORMANCE EXAMINATION PROCEDURAL & PERFORMANCE ERRORS:**

The mock performance examination shall include:

- a. Deliberate error in field test procedures
- b. Deliberate error in interpretation and/or recording of the field test results
- c. Proper field test procedure, interpretation, and recording of field test results.

4.1.3 PROCTOR APPLICATION (4-29-22)

## APPLICATION for Appointment as an ABPA Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Exam Proctor

### INSTRUCTIONS TO PROCTOR APPLICANT

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| <p>1. Read through application prior to completing. Any incomplete or improperly prepared form will be returned. Complete form with as much information as possible to allow ABPA to make an accurate evaluation of your credentials. If not applicable, mark NA.</p> <p>2. Please type or print to ensure your application is legible.</p> <p>3. Mail or email completed form to ABPA Certification at the contact information listed below.</p> | <p>4. To be considered for proctor training, applicant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must Possess a current ABPA Tester Certification</li> <li>• Should have successfully completed a minimum of one ABPA Tester re-certification</li> </ul> <p>5. Applicants who meet these requirements will be scheduled for an upcoming ABPA Proctor Training Program.</p> | <p>6. Applicant will be considered for proctor status after successful completion of an ABPA Proctor Training Program.</p> <p>7. Refer to ABPA Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Proctor Qualifications for additional information.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Please contact the ABPA with any questions you may have.<br/><i>Information and Rules available at <a href="http://www.abpa.org">www.abpa.org</a></i></p> |
|---|--|--|

**American Backflow Prevention Association Certification Program**  
[certification@abpa.org](mailto:certification@abpa.org)

FULL NAME \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ CELL PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

ABPA Tester Certification No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Issuance: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of most recent ABPA Tester Recertification: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Past proctor experience? \_\_\_\_\_

**I certify that the above information given by me is true.**

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**4.1.4 PROCTOR COMPENSATION & BENEFITS (11/9/21)**

4.1.4.1 Waive Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Recertification Fee (every three years) for each Proctor complying with Proctor Qualification Requirements.

4.1.4.2 Proctor compensation is derived from a portion of each Tester application fee.

Proctor Fee: \$100.00

- Eight (8) hours scheduled based upon five (5) applicants per proctor, plus Examination Monitor (EM).
- Most full day examinations start at 8:00 am.

Below are sample calculations to determine the number of Proctors needed to conduct the Performance Examination:

20 applicants:

20 applicants ÷ 5 applicants per proctor = 4 proctors  
plus Exam Monitor

12 applicants:

12 applicants ÷ 5 applicants per proctor = (2.4) 2 proctors  
plus Exam Monitor

### 4.3 PROCTOR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - FAQ (11-9-21)

## Proctor FAQ

### What is it?

Proctors are used in the ABPA Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Certification Program to observe and evaluate the performance examinations. The Proctor will be appointed by ABPA for a specific examination date and location. Complete Proctor qualifications are available on the ABPA website.

### How Do I Become A Proctor?

You must currently be an ABPA certified Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester, and you *should* have completed at least one ABPA Tester re-certification. You must also successfully complete a proctor training program.

### How Do I Sign Up?

**Submit Application:** Fill out the Proctor Application on the ABPA web site: [www.abpa.org](http://www.abpa.org). Applicants who comply with the requirements will be scheduled for an ABPA Proctor Training Program.

### Where and When Are Proctor Training Programs Offered

Information is available from the ABPA web site or contact the National Office for a schedule.

### Do I Have To Take A Test

Yes, administered at the conclusion of the Proctor Training class (minimum of 6 hours). The Proctor Applicant shall observe a mock performance exam, during which the person performing the field test procedures may make deliberate errors in the field test procedure and recording of data. The Proctor Trainee shall identify all errors and record them accurately.

### What Do I Get?

A qualified proctor applicant who successfully completes the Proctor Training Program will receive a wallet card containing your name, date, and number.

Each day you act as a proctor, you are eligible to receive a Proctor Compensation fee of \$100.

### Do I Still Have To Maintain My Tester Certification?

Yes. However, your Tester recertification fee (every three years) will be waived as long as you comply with the Proctor Qualification Requirements.

### How Long Does My Proctor Status Last?

A Proctor must renew every three years by successfully completing a Proctor Training Program.