FACT SHEET: BACKFLOW DEVICES

2020 MINNESOTA PLUMBING CODE

Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry

REQUIREMENTS

Refer to the 2020 Minnesota Plumbing Code Parts 603.5.23 through 603.5.23.4 for details about the backflow prevention requirements discussed in this fact sheet.

Devices that need to be tested

The 2020 Minnesota Plumbing Code requires that all **testable** backflow devices be tested upon installation and at least annually thereafter by a certified backflow assembly tester. Testable devices include:

- Reduced pressure principal backflow prevention assemblies,
- Reduced pressure detector fire protection backflow prevention assemblies,
- Double check backflow prevention assemblies,
- Pressure vacuum breaker backflow prevention assemblies,
- Double check detector fire protection backflow prevention assemblies, and
- Spill resistant pressure vacuum breakers.

Installing the device

- A licensed plumber must perform the installation of a backflow prevention device.
- The public water supplier must be notified within 30 days following installation of the device on a community public water system.
- A plumbing permit must be obtained from the administrative authority prior to installation.

Testing and maintenance

- The backflow device must be tested upon initial installation and at least annually thereafter.
- Test results must be submitted to the administrative authority and to the community public water supplier within 30 days of testing.

Applicability

- Reduced pressure (RPZ) devices have had testing requirements for many years. New and existing RPZ installations must be tested annually.
- *The testing requirements for testable non-RPZ devices became effective for installations made on or after Jan. 23, 2016.*

Tester qualifications

Testing of backflow prevention devices requires certification to ASSE Standard 5110. Testing of reduced pressure principal devices (RPZs) requires an additional certification by the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility of the municipality

The municipality is responsible for notifying owners of backflow devices of the need for initial and annual testing of backflow devices. This can be done through the plumber when the plumbing permit is issued. It may be helpful for the municipality to prepare an information sheet to provide to the plumber at time of the plumbing permit application. As a condition of the permit, the plumber informs the device owner of the requirements.

Responsibility of the owner

The owner of the backflow prevention device is responsible for making sure the backflow device is tested upon installation and at least annually thereafter. The owner is responsible for arranging for a backflow device tester to test devices at least annually.

Responsibility of the backflow tester

- The backflow device tester is responsible for testing the backflow device and tagging it with the testing date, tester signature and backflow certification number.
- Written records of testing and maintenance must be maintained and submitted to the administrative authority and the community public water supplier within 30 days following the test.

Responsibility of water purveyor

- The Safe Drinking Water Act holds the water purveyor responsible for ensuring the quality of the water all the way to the free-flowing outlet of the consumer.
- The water purveyor must maintain records of the backflow prevention devices and ensure the device testing is recorded on a yearly basis.

Responsibility of the plumbing contractor

The plumbing contractor is responsible for informing the building owner of the need to have their backflow devices tested upon installation and at least annually thereafter.