



Backflow Prevention Frequently Asked Questions

DOUBLE CHECK VALVE ASSEMBLY INSTALLATION and TESTING REQUIREMENTS

Why do I need a backflow prevention assembly?

Backflow prevention keeps your drinking water safe by keeping potentially contaminated water within a building's water lines from being drawn back into the potable water system.

What is a backflow prevention assembly (or backflow preventer)?

A backflow prevention assembly is a protective valve typically installed immediately behind the water meter on the customer's side. Backflow preventers allow water to flow from the potable water system to the customer's water lines behind the meter; however, water or other substances may not flow from the customer's side back out into the water distribution system.

What if a required backflow preventer is not installed or tested?

Carroll County Water Authority will not be able to maintain water service to a property where a required backflow prevention assembly has not been installed, tested and proof of compliance has not been received by our office.

What is a Double Check Valve Assembly?

A Double Check Valve Assembly is a backflow preventer consisting of two independently operating spring loaded check valves with tightly closing shut off valves on each side of the check valves, plus properly located test cocks for the testing of each check valve.

What is the difference between a Double Check Valve and a residential dual check?

A Double Check Valve Assembly is a testable backflow prevention assembly. A residential dual check is a non-testable device. Residential dual checks are not adequate protection for commercial, industrial, irrigation, fire protection, and other non-residential services.

Does it matter how a Double Check Valve Assembly is installed?

Yes. Installation of all backflow prevention devices and assemblies shall be in accordance with the Georgia State Plumbing Code, the AWWA Manual of Water Supply Practices M14 "Recommended Practice for Backflow Prevention and Cross-Connection Control," the U.S. EPA "Cross-Connection Control Manual," and the University of Southern California Foundation for Cross-Connection Control and Hydraulic Research "Manual of Cross-Connection Control." Backflow preventer installations for containment (i.e. installed immediately downstream of the water meter, but upstream of any branches of the owner's piping system) shall be by a duly licensed plumbing, mechanical, and/or utility contractor.

The Double Check Valve Assembly shall not be buried in earth but may be installed below ground in a meter box or pit provided that ball valve test cocks fitted with brass plugs are used. A full-port resilient-seated ball valve in sizes through 2 inch shall be near the inlet and outlet sides of the assembly. The assembly shall be provided with three ball valve test cocks and a



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fourth test cock shall be provided on the upstream side of the inlet shutoff valve. When below ground, a union or flange should be near the inlet and outlet sides. No intervening connections shall be between the shutoff valves and the backflow preventer.

Can I install my Double Check Valve inside my building?

When a double check valve backflow preventer is used in the containment concept, it shall be installed at or as close to the service connection (immediately behind the meter) as practical in an approved meter box or covered vault.

When do I need to have my backflow preventer tested?

Backflow prevention assemblies must be tested:

- Upon installation
- Whenever they are taken apart for cleaning or repairs
- Annually

Test report forms must be submitted to CCWA for proof of compliance.

Why do I need my backflow preventer tested?

Backflow prevention protects the public potable water system from possible contamination. Since backflow preventers contain parts that can break down and wear out it is important to test them routinely to make sure your assemblies are functioning properly.

How do I get my backflow preventer tested?

A certified backflow prevention assembly tester must perform any tests on your assemblies. Although many plumbers are certified testers, testers are not required to be licensed plumbers. You may search for certified testers by visiting the Georgia Association of Water Professionals website (www.gawp.org), selecting "Directory Searches" at the top of the page, and choosing "Backflow Certified Tester Search". You may search by a tester's last name, employer, or by city. If you leave all of the fields blank and click search, you will be provided with a full list of all the Certified Backflow Testers in Georgia. Please note, testing certifications are held by individuals, not by the company for whom they work.

When contacting a certified backflow prevention assembly tester, you should ask if they are approved to test in the Carroll County Water Authority's jurisdiction. If they are not, they may contact Doug Griffin at 770.832.1277 ext. 128 to obtain the necessary paperwork and report forms.

How will I know when my backflow preventer is due to be tested?

CCWA will send out notification letters approximately four to six weeks before your tests are due. You will be assigned an annual due date based on your location so that your backflow prevention assembly will be due for testing at the same time every year. It is your responsibility to have your backflow preventer tested on time whether or not you receive a notification.



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How much will it cost to have a backflow preventer tested?

The cost of testing backflow prevention assemblies varies by tester, assembly size, how much time is involved in accessing the assembly, or any repairs that are necessary. Testing larger assemblies or accessing assemblies which may have become buried may cost more. You should discuss prices and services with the tester/testing company. Testing a ¾" or 1" Double Check Valve Assembly on average may cost approximately \$50 – 75. Again, this cost varies by tester.

My backflow preventer failed a test. Who can repair it?

While the individual may be certified to test the backflow prevention assembly, repairs are normally performed by a licensed plumber. Please realize that not all certified testers are licensed plumbers, and not all licensed plumbers are certified testers. You may need to contact a licensed plumber for repairs.

Once a backflow preventer is repaired, it must be retested to ensure proper operation and the test report forms submitted to CCWA for proof of compliance.

Who submits the test report form to the Carroll County Water Authority?

As the owner of backflow preventer the Annual Testing Notice will be sent directly to you, but original test report forms must be submitted to CCWA by the certified tester. Test report forms must be received in our office by the due date stated in your notification letter. You should obtain a copy of the test report from the tester for your records. Test report submission instructions are detailed on the test report form.

Can the Carroll County Water Authority recommend a tester or plumber for me?

No, CCWA does not endorse or recommend any particular backflow tester, company or plumber.

Can the Carroll County Water Authority install or test my backflow preventer for me?

No, CCWA does not perform backflow preventer tests in lieu of those performed by a certified tester. Any tests performed by CCWA personnel are for field checks or quality control purposes only.

How long does the test take?

The test takes about 10-20 minutes per backflow assembly, during which time the water must be shut off briefly. You should prepare for a brief water outage while the test is performed and schedule accordingly.