



MEMO

TO: BOARD OF DIRECTORS
FROM: BRAD CORKUM, OPERATIONS DIRECTOR
DATE: APRIL 3, 2008
SUBJECT: CROSS CONNECTION COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

At the March Board of Directors' meeting the public had the opportunity to express their views and concerns over the changes being proposed to the District's cross connection control program. Under the current policy the District requires irrigation customers with backflow preventers to have their backflow devices tested on an annual basis and provide those test reports to the District for compliance. The burden of hiring and scheduling certified testers to perform this service has been the customer's responsibility. The District's Cross Connection Control Committee has recommended the District assume the responsibility for the annual testing requirements for all irrigation meter customers with backflow devices. This would remove the burden from the customer having to schedule private testers to perform the test, would guarantee full compliance, and best of all ensure the highest level of protection for the District's 20,000 customers. This was also deemed to be the most cost effective and efficient way to administer the program. The District's proposed fee for this new service would be \$5.00 per month, which would also include repair and/or replacement of any devices found to be non-compliant during inspections.

The public attendees at the March Board of Directors' meeting included several irrigation meter customers and one certified tester whom were all generally opposed to the District's proposed changes to the cross connection control policy. The one message that was continually voiced was they were happy with things the way they

were, preferred to stay in the private sector, and were receiving their current backflow inspections at a rate that was lower than the District's proposed rate. Keep in mind responses from customers in favor of the proposed new District policy were approximately 3 to 1 to those who opposed.

As a response to the public input, the Cross Connection Control Committee met on April 3, 2008 to discuss placing the entire administration of the cross connection control program out to bid to the private sector. This would give the private sector the opportunity to see if they could provide the same level of service the District proposes for \$5.00 per month per customer or less. The scope of services to be advertised would include all facets of the program which includes, testing of backflow devices, repair or replacement of backflow devices found to be non-compliant during testing, all record keeping, submission of all test reports for DHEC inspections, and all annual notification mailings (up to three per customer) if needed. The contractor would be responsible for providing all required equipment including backflow test meter, vehicles, fuel, and provide proof of a valid current backflow testers license. In addition, certain insurance requirements such as liability and workman's compensation insurance would be required. The Cross Connection Control Committee recommended a pre-bid conference be held with all perspective bidders to make absolutely clear all those choosing to bid had a thorough understanding of the scope of services they would be required to perform. Outsourcing this work this would negate the need of the District having to hire another employee to administer the program internally, however, it would not relieve the District of all responsibilities to the program. The District would still have to provide some level of administrative assistance to the tester in providing updated customer lists, new customer additions, follow up with the contractor and the recording and monitoring of all inspection reports. The installation of backflow prevention devices on new irrigation accounts or retrofitting older irrigation accounts with backflow devices would be performed by the District.

The Cross Connection Control Committee recommends bidding out the administration, testing, repair and or replacement of all cross connection control devices. Once the bids are received, the Board will determine the most cost effective method of administering the cross connection program. The proposed rates and charges schedule for all

ancillary cross connection control costs has been tabled until such time as bids are received and all costs are reviewed. The Cross Connection Control Committee recommends that once the Board of Directors reach a consensus, the cross connection control resolution be amended to include all three phases of the implementation process at the outset, including the following:

Phase 1: Customers currently with irrigation meters and testable backflow devices who are now required to perform an annual test.

Phase 2: Ending the current grandfather clause and bringing these customers into compliance with the amended resolution.

Phase 3: Inclusion into the program of those customers with in-ground irrigation systems who choose to irrigate through their portable (drinking) water meter.