



SWEETWATER AUTHORITY

Water Quality Committee

June 16, 2025

REVISED

Consideration to Approve the Sweetwater Authority's Cross-Connection Control Plan

RECOMMENDATION

Consideration of approval to submit the Authority's Cross-Connection Control Plan to the California State Water Resources Control Board by the required submission deadline of July 1, 2025.

OVERVIEW

In 2017, Assembly Bill 1671 was passed into law, requiring the California State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) to establish guidelines for backflow protection and cross-connection control. On December 19, 2023, The California State Water Resources Control Board adopted a new Cross-Connection Control Policy Handbook (CCCPH) that went into effect July 1, 2024. Previously, the Department of Public Health's California Administrative Code, Title 17, outlined regulations for cross-connection control and backflow protection. The CCCPH introduces updated standards for cross-connection prevention in California's public water systems and replaces portions of Title 17 that address cross-connection and backflow regulations. The primary objective of the CCCPH is the protection of public health through the establishment of standards, and has strengthened regulations to further safeguard public water systems from contamination risks. The new regulations require all public water systems to provide a Cross-Connection Control Plan to the California State Water Resources Control Board by July 1, 2025. The Cross-Connection Control Plan must comprehensively outline the procedures and documentation required to maintain compliance with the regulations. This includes detailing:

- How the system will meet each requirement.
- The coordination of procedures with local entities.
- A detail procedure and listing of personnel involved in completing hazard assessments.
- The legal authority for implementing corrective actions.
- A set of procedures for responding to backflow incidents.
- Develop and outline a public outreach and education program.

One significant regulatory update is the classification of temporary connections to fire hydrants for miscellaneous uses, including construction, as a high hazard. All construction meters used by Sweetwater Authority for fire hydrant connections must now be retrofitted with Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Prevention Assemblies to comply with these enhanced measures. The CCCPH also addresses the potential risks

that private fire protection systems pose to the integrity of the public water system. These regulations mandate that public water systems ensure the installation of an approved backflow prevention assembly on all fire protection systems within a ten-year period following the adoption of the CCCPH. The Authority has long been at the forefront of cross-connection control, prioritizing the protection of public health and the integrity of the water supply. In 2018, well in advance of the 2024 CCCPH requirements, the Authority took proactive steps by requiring the replacement of all single swing-check valves with Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Prevention Devices. This initiative resulted in 380 fire services requiring upgrades at the time the project was approved by the Board. As of now, 278 upgrades remain to be completed.

FISCAL IMPACT

These new requirements, while critical for public health and water system integrity, bring financial and operational considerations for the Authority. The Cross-Connection Control Policy Handbook imposes more stringent requirements for backflow prevention and cross-connection control without providing additional funding to support these new requirements. In compliance with the CCCPH, staff will have to perform initial hazard assessments on more than 34,500 service connections and create a process to resurvey commercial and multi-residential properties when ownership changes. Given the scope of the changes, the implementation of the CCCPH will necessitate additional resources to meet the compliance requirements. The newly defined high hazard designation for temporary hydrant connections will necessitate additional infrastructure upgrades for the Authority. Specifically, all construction meters require retrofitting with Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Prevention Assemblies to ensure compliance. The estimated cost for these upgrades is reflected below:

Item	Unit Cost	Quantity	Estimated Total Cost
Construction Meter Reduced Pressure Assembly Retrofit	\$1,793	76	\$136,268.00

Upon the SWRCB's approval of the Authority's Cross-Connection Plan, staff will return to the Board to propose a funding plan for implementing the Cross-Connection Plan.

NEXT STEPS

1. Approve staff to submit the Authority's Cross-Connection Plan to the California State Water Resources Control Board for review and approval by the required submission deadline date of July 1, 2025.
2. Other direction as determined by the Governing Board.

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SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Attachments

1. State Water Resources Control Board Cross-Connection Control Policy Handbook
2. Water System FAQ for the Cross-Connection Control Policy Handbook (CCCPH)
3. Cross-Connection Control Policy Handbook Staff Report
4. Sweetwater Authority Cross-Connection Control Plan - Revised
5. Cross-Connection Control Policy Handbook PowerPoint - Revised
6. Previous Cross-Connection Control Prevention Program 2018

Strategic Plan

Goal #1 Water Quality (WQ) Provide high quality water that meets regulatory requirements.

- WQ4: Administer the Authority's Standard Specifications Section 17 Cross-Connection and Backflow Prevention Ordinance to protect the public water supply from contamination.

Past Board Actions

April 23, 2025	The Governing Board approved extending the due date of all fire service lateral swing check upgrades to July 1, 2034, to align with the State Water Resource Control Board requirements.
June 06, 2022	The Governing Board approved a two-year extension for the deadline stipulated in Resolution 18-07. This resolution mandated the replacement of all single swing-checks on fire service laterals with an approved Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Prevention Detector Assembly by April 25, 2023. The new deadline was set to April 25, 2025.
April 25, 2018	The Governing Board passed Resolution 18-07 Amendments to the Rates and Rules which requires all single swing-checks on fire service laterals to be replaced with an approved Reduced Pressure Principle Backflow Prevention Detector Assembly by April 25, 2023.
April 13, 1988	The Governing Board passed Resolution No. 88-3 adopting the Sweetwater Authority Cross Connection and Backflow Prevention Program.