



AMERICAN BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSOCIATION

Position Statement Concerning WET-CHARGED FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEMS

In pursuit of the stated goals of the American Backflow Prevention Association (ABPA) of protecting the quality and integrity of clean drinking, the Board of Directors believes that a Position Statement regarding backflow protection in “Wet-Charged Fire Suppression Systems” is essential.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) establishes clean drinking water standards and charges the water purveyor with the responsibility of providing and maintaining clean drinking water. Several water quality studies have shown that the non-potable water within wet-charged fire suppression systems can cause leaching of such metals as lead, copper, zinc, iron and manganese from metal piping, can cause leaching of various organic chemicals from plastic piping, and can develop microbial populations that further corrode metal pipe. Each of these situations results in water contained within the wet-charged fire suppression system that does not meet the clean drinking water quality standards. Therefore, backflow prevention commensurate with the degree of hazard is needed in order to protect the drinking water supply from possible contamination from the water contained in wet-charged fire suppression systems.

In order to assure the continuing integrity of clean drinking water, it is the position of the ABPA that all wet-charged fire suppression systems (both existing and those currently under construction) which are fed by a clean drinking water supply, be protected from backflow with an approved, properly installed, and testable backflow prevention assembly commensurate with the degree of hazard established by the local administrative authority. A single check valve or fire alarm check valve, regardless of its listings or approvals, is not construed to be an adequate backflow prevention technique.

Approved by the ABPA Board of Directors: January 12, 1992 – Las Vegas, Nevada

Reapproved: May 19, 2010 – New Orleans, Louisiana

Reapproved: May 16, 2015 – Nashville, Tennessee.