

# The Direct Connection



A newsletter dedicated to Cross Connection Control and Backflow Prevention [www.abpa-sa.org](http://www.abpa-sa.org)

January Vol. 46 Issue 1

## Message from ABPA International President

As we begin this new year, I'd like to update you on what's going with our national association. Membership remains steady, around 900, consisting of: testers, water purveyors, government officials, contractors, engineers, manufacturers, inspectors and consumers. Our ABPA finances are stable, with certification programs continuing to be our cornerstone and expanding. Region director positions 8-10 remain open.

We have signed an MOU with the International Code Council and are looking to sign with other professional organizations. Our new website is nearing completion, and the long-awaited ABPA CCC manual is printed.

Meantime, your ABPA Executive Committee has focused attention on assisting some of our more struggling chapters. Our VP Kathy Riley has discussed some of these efforts in her previous newsletter articles.

Last October, I attended the ASDWA (Association of State Drinking Water Administrators) Conference in Long Beach, along with four other ABPA representatives. We spoke with many good contacts and program administrators from across the country (two from my own state of Texas). There were about 300 total attendees, live and virtual. These ASDWA contacts are some of the most important ABPA communicates with each year. These are the people associated with enforcing backflow prevention programs and developing state regulations – across the country. It was another great event, well worth ABPA's time.

Now in 2026, I'd like to remind members of ABPA's purpose. Article II of our Bylaws states, we are "... committed to providing education programs, technical assistance and public awareness in the field of backflow prevention..." This has been a key part of who we are since ABPA was formed, in 1984.

Recently, we have updated our association list of documented backflow incidents, up through last year. The most recent of these were printed on a large banner, complete with photos, and displayed at the ASDWA conference last year. The display generated a lot of interest at our ABPA booth.

This is what ABPA is all about: education of backflow prevention and CCC. One misconception, I've heard since becoming your association president is, "Why doesn't ABPA become involved in state legislative processes?" This is a fair question. Put simply, this is not who we are or what we do. On a larger scale, across the country and around the world, our association role is to educate the public, including state policy makers – about the critical health and safety value of backflow prevention and cross-connection control.

On the ethics topic, this seems to be a more prevalent subject these days. You may recall the popular "Ethics for Testers" presentation during one of our national conferences a few years back. Also, remember we approved our own ethical code just last year, referred to as the "ABPA Code of Conduct."

This was an important addition to your association, related to all aspects of ABPA. An ethics training requirement for water licenses has been considered in states such as Kentucky, Tennessee and Texas. Here in Texas, an ethics petition was submitted regarding possible course curriculum that would include a 2-hour minimum training based on ethics for water/wastewater license renewal. More recently, a survey went out regarding ethics training for all other water licenses as well.

Thanks to all involved in the American Backflow Prevention Association. Anyone who wants to get more involved, feel free to contact me, headquarters staff or someone from your local ABPA chapter.

Troy Baird – ABPA President - [info@speackbackflow.com](mailto:info@speackbackflow.com)

## **January Meeting Details**

Meetings of the San Antonio Chapter ABPA are held the second Thursday of every month except December. Dinner and refreshments are served at 6:00 p.m. sharp with the meeting starting at 6:15. This meeting is:

**Date: Thursday January 8, 2026**

**Time: 6:00 PM (pre-registration required to receive a meal)**

**Place: SAWS Bldg. 2 Conference Room  
2800 US Hwy 281 North**

**Meeting Presenter: TBA**

**No alcoholic  
beverages allowed**

**Next meeting date: February 12th, 2026**

### **A Big last meeting thanks to:**

James Garvin for his presentation on Enforcement and Ethics of a Backflow Prevention and Cross Connection Control Program.

## **January Agenda**

- 5:00 p.m. General discussion and quorum confirmation
- 5:15 p.m. Call Meeting to order.
- 5:20 p.m. Secretary's Report. Read and approve the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 5:25 p.m. Treasurer's Report. Discussion and approval of the treasurer's report.
- 5:30 p.m. Supply Officer's Report
- 5:35 p.m. Vice President's, Directors', and any other reports for the good of the chapter. Comments, new business, any discussion.
- 5:40 p.m. Training Report. Training & Meal Sponsors
- 5:45 p.m. Webmaster Report
- 5:50 p.m. President's Report. New & old business
- 6:00 p.m. Meal is served.
- 6:15 p.m. General Membership Meeting & Training
  - 1. Report from the Directors Meeting, President.
  - 2. City, Regional, and National Reports. Reports from any City personnel present.
  - 3. Training program for the evening.
  - 4. Raffle prize drawing.

**Happy New Year, welcome 2026!**

## "Direct Talk" by the President

The February meeting will be held in the SAWS conference room in the Tower II building located at 2800 U.S. Hwy. 281. The Director's meeting will start at 5:15 PM with the meal beginning at 6:00 PM and meeting starting at 6:15 PM.

*Jeff Stricker*

Check/update your license information here: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/licensing/forms/contactupdate>.

## MINUTES

### ABPA - SAN ANTONIO CHAPTER GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING Thursday, November 13, 2025

<b>EXECUTIVE OFFICERS – PRESENT</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE OFFICERS – ABSENT</b>
Jeff Stricker - President	Greg Shean - Secretary
Art Trejo - Treasurer/Membership	Tim Sales - Vice President
Trinidad Chairez – Past President	
<b>OFFICERS SPECIAL TO THE CHAPTER – PRESENT</b>	<b>OFFICERS SPECIAL TO THE CHAPTER - ABSENT</b>
Matt Wilgen - Webmaster	Supply Officer - Vacant
Jeff Meeks - Sgt. At Arms	Joe Young - Program Director
Carl Michaud – Gauge Testing/Certification	
Mark Schnur - Liaison to SAWS	

<b>DIRECTORS AT LARGE – PRESENT</b>	<b>DIRECTORS AT LARGE – ABSENT</b>
Robert Stricker - 2 years	Jeff Hoffman - 2 years
Bruce Rathburn - 2 years	
Bob Clark - 1 year	
Fred Baird - 1 year	
GUESTS PRESENT: James Garvin, TX Water	

Agenda Item #1. Jeff started the meeting and asked that everyone to turn off their cell phones. He then asked for a moment of silence. INFO.

Agenda Item #2. Secretary's Report: The October minutes were in the newsletter. Robert (as always) made a motion to accept. Seconded. Passed. INFO.

Agenda Item #3. Treasurer's Report: Art reported the amount in our checking account. INFO.

Agenda Item #4. Meeting Sponsor: ABPA-SA sponsored the meeting. INFO.

Agenda Item #5. Meal: ABPA-SA sponsored the meal of Jason's Deli box sandwiches. Art donated and delivered the water and sodas for the meeting. Please e-mail Art before 5 PM on Monday. The order is input at 5 PM. If you do not order – you will only get a meal if there is a no show. INFO.

Agenda Item #6. Supply: Art, acting Supply Officer, has been floating ideas of what to do with the chapter supply inventory. It was decided that the inventory would be eliminated with the exception of caps. INFO.

Agenda Item #7. Raffle: This is the annual ABPA-SA raffle, all November and 2025 meeting tickets are eligible. The chapter went on a "\$700 shopping spree" to make it, as always, special. Prizes and winners are provided. INFO.

Agenda Item #8. Training: James Garvin, Water Quality Department Backflow Prevention Specialist, will present training on Cross Connection Control & Backflow Prevention Program. INFO.

Agenda Item #9. SAWS: Mark Schnur reported that SAWS is updating their cross-connection control guide. He is looking for volunteers to help with the update. OPEN.

Agenda Item #10. Gauge Testing: Carl wants testers to request the white copy when getting their gauge certified so he or she has a good, clean copy to scan and submit to SAWS. INFO.

Agenda Item #11. ABPA National. Troy reported that they are working on a Memorandum of Understanding with the ICC (International Code Council). The new ABPA CCC manual is now available for pre-orders. They will be shipped in January. Next year's Conference will be in Las Vegas from May 4-6, 2026. INFO.

Agenda Item #12. Attendance Drawing: A \$200 cash award went to Dwayne Bergman for missing no 2025 chapter meetings. There were 7 eligible. The 6 were then combined with the 11 who missed only 1 meeting. Bruce Rathburn won the second, \$100 cash award. INFO.

Agenda Item #13. Agenda Item 7. Training: James Garvin presented a detailed presentation on Cross Connection Control & Backflow Prevention Programs. Many questions regarding details of operating a backflow prevention program were answered. INFO.

Agenda Item 14. Training: James Garvin with the Texas Water Company (TWC) covered important topics relating to its customers regarding the protection of the public water supply. Requirements of a Customer Service Inspection (CSI) and backflow testing were discussed. A CSI is required before TWC will allow continuous water service. All relevant information is entered directly into an online password-protected electronic system.

Water quality and water safety are Priority #1. The Backflow Prevention and Cross Connection Policy aims to safeguard public drinking water and protect the health and safety of our customers from contamination by isolating any potential cross-connections that could backflow into the public water supply.

Provided were many TWC policy references: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – Cross Connection Control Manual, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) Rules and Regulations for Public Water Systems; Occupational Safety & Health Administration (OSHA); Federal Register, number 202; American Water Works Association (AWWA) Standards C510 and C511, and Manual M14); Uniform Plumbing Code (UPC); USC Foundation for Cross-Connection Control and Hydraulic Research, Manual of Cross-Connection Control, Tenth Edition - Introduction to Cross-Connection Control.

Many jurisdictions have strict non-compliance regulations requiring professional testing by certified individuals. Failure to comply with testing requirements can result in monetary fines or other legal action. Non-compliance could potentially lead to water service being shut off.

There are physical and environmental risks working with pressurized water. Improper handling of pressurized water systems can lead to accidents and injuries, as to importance of TCEQ license water experience requirements. Testers may have to work in flooded or confined spaces, which can pose risks like exposure to hazardous gases or dangerous insects. Testing may require climbing ladders or working in challenging environments, increasing the risk of falls.

Certified Backflow Prevention Assembly Testers must comply with TCEQ Occupational Licensing rules found in 30 TAC. Responsibility of Licensed Tester, when employed by a customer, a Licensed Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester is responsible for the test, repair, overhaul, and maintenance of backflow prevention assemblies. The licensed tester will be responsible for making competent inspections and reporting condition of backflow prevention assemblies through reports including any repairs. Customer and enforcement gets copy of TCEQ approved T&M form.

BPAT Register Need to Know: BPAT must register with TWC or other water company. Accounts are to be maintained, some with multiple testers with sub-accounts. The Company must have liability insurance (depending on jurisdiction, required by TWC). In the event a tester does not file the T&M report correctly, the tester and/or the company may be put on probation or in extreme cases removed from TWC registered list of testers. Testing in TWC water service area is a privilege not a guarantee. TWC must protect the safety and integrity of the water we deliver and the customers served.

Backflow prevention testing is required to assure that backflow prevention assemblies continue to operate satisfactorily, as is necessary that tests be conducted in accordance with desired performance standards. It will be the responsibility of the customer to initiate the testing service and any necessary maintenance. All tests and repairs shall be performed by a Licensed Tester. The tester must have an "Account" number to submit the T&M report. This can be received from the customer or by emailing [backflow@txwaterco.com](mailto:backflow@txwaterco.com). The original T&M Report, along with written maintenance results, to be completed by the Licensed Tester and submitted to The Texas Water Company within 10 business days for record. The tester or inspector in TWC area will enter all information directly into the online password-protected system provided by Envirotrax. Testers and inspectors will no longer be able to submit paper reports directly to Texas Water Company.

Selection of assembly type is based on the degree of hazard determined. The degree of hazard will be determined by a Cross-Connection Control Representative. The determination will primarily be based on the TCEQ's Rules and Regulations for Public Water Systems §290.47(f), Assessment of Hazard and Selection of Assemblies. Each instance shall be reviewed individually and may include on-site inspection of the establishment by a Cross-Connection Control Representative.

Common T&M rejections: Assembly / ID Tag Picture, T&M Report un-filed Greater than 10 days, DCDA with no meter loop information, failed "Ghost" Report, Backflow Assembly Non-Compliance.

Location & ID Tag Pictures: Report "location" description must complement the pictures. i.e. "ground vault @ NW corner of property near dumpsters." The picture must clearly show the ID Tag with the make, model, size, and most importantly serial number of the backflow assembly. The photo provided must clearly show the location of the backflow prevention assembly (BPA).

T & M reports must be filed within 10 calendar days: The original T&M Report, along with written maintenance results, will be completed by the Licensed Tester and submitted to The Texas Water Company within 10 business days. If filed past 10 days, the report will be rejected. A return and retest of the BPA will be needed to update and refile the report.

DCDA with No meter loop information: The required, meter loop information, including the serial number, pre-meter readings, flow (Yes or No), and post-meter readings. All important recorded information.

Backflow Assembly Non-Compliance: The TWC is responsible for enforcement, not the tester. Is the assembly installed in accordance with manufacturer recommendations and/or local codes? This is not an AUTOMATIC fail. Depending on situation, if the Backflow Prevention Assembly (BPA) that was installed does not meet current state and local code requirements a modification may be required in order to comply with TCEQ regulations and TWC standards. Replacements: the new assembly must be tested and submitted within 10 days. A failed "Ghost" report: is report that indicates testing was attempted but did not occur, using USC testing procedure. A properly tested assembly is completed on a TCEQ approved report form and qualifies as "TESTED".

Important Notice to Tester: If Test & Maintenance Reports (TMR's) are filed incorrectly, TWC reserves the right to take further action, which may include suspending the tester and, potentially the associated company, from performing backflow testing within the TWC water utility service area.

Please submit questions to: Water Quality Team Backflow Prevention Specialist Office: 830.312.4543, backflow@txwaterco.com, PO Box 1742 Canyon Lake, TX 78133. Mobile: 830.369.3979.

Adjournment. Adjourn the meeting at 6:30 PM for the raffle.



Greg Shean - Secretary ABPA-SA

## **BPAT ETHICS**

“I CERTIFY, UNDER PENALTY OF LAW, INCLUDING POSSIBLE LOSS OF LICENSE, FINES AND PENALTIES, THAT I HAVE TESTED THE BFPA LISTED ABOVE AT THE TIME AND DATE LISTED AND ALL INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS ACCURATE AND I HAVE PERSONALLY COMPLETED THIS FORM IN FULL”.

*This statement was developed by Bill Hamrick and Katrina Hamrick, Atty at Law, and was a result of numerous meetings between Troy Baird, Bruce Rathburn, Bill Hamrick and Fred Baird. There were many suggested enforcement modifications for water purveyors and plumbing inspection departments to control ethics and backflow testing.*

## **Quote of the Month:**

My toughest fight was with my first wife.

*Muhammad Ali*

## **QUIZ - True or False**

T F 1. The installation of an RP 12" above grade is measured to the lowest part (bottom) of the assembly.

T F 2. When testing a DC that has a fouled #1 check valve, the test cannot be continued to obtain an accurate reading for check valve #2.

T F 3. Two most common issues found during assembly repair include O-ring problems and debris.

T F 4. A DC is a low hazard assembly that is not designed to protect against backpressure.

T F 5. When a tester finds an inoperable shut off valve on an assembly and cannot perform the field test procedure, it may be acceptable to use another shut off valve upstream or downstream of the assembly to perform the field test.

## ABPA-SA Board of Directors 2026

- 1) President – Jeff Stricker
- 2) Vice President – Timothy Sales
- 3) Treasurer – Arthur Trejo
- 4) Secretary – Greg Shean
- 5) Immediate Past President – Trinidad Chairez

### Special Officers to the Association

- 6) SGT-AT-ARMS – Jeff Meeks
- 7) Liaison to SAWS – Mark Schnur
- 8) Program Director – Open
- 9) Gauge Testing and Certification – Carl Michaud
- 10) Membership & Newsletter – Art Trejo
- 11) Webmaster – Matthew Wilgen

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2. Bruce Rathburn
3. Robert Stricker

#### One-year term

4. Fred Baird
5. Robert (Bob) Clark

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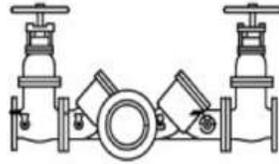
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**ONE  
YEAR**  
(11 Issues)

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Quiz answers 1. True 2. False 3. True 4. False 5. True

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## PHCC-SAN ANTONIO CALENDAR

**5  
JAN**

### DEADLINE FOR PLUMBING PRE-APPRENTICE COURSE

72 hour course (January - April 2026)  
OSHA-10/First Aid/Apprentice Card/  
Basic Plumbing & Safety Training



**8  
JAN**

### MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM  
Location: **Barn Door**  
Guest Speaker: Jason Nelson, CPA, ADKF  
Topic: The One Big Beautiful Bill



**16  
JAN**

### EARLY BIRD DEADLINE FOR SPORTING CLAY TOURNAMENT

11:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
Location: National Shooting Complex

**10  
FEB**

### JOINT MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING W/ASPE

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM  
Location: **Barn Door**  
Guest Speaker: American Society of Plumbing Engineers  
Topic: Plumbing Engineers Update



**26  
FEB**

### SPORTING CLAY TOURNAMENT

11:00 AM - 5:00 PM  
Location: National Shooting Complex

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*For further information about ABPA, contact:*

Troy Baird – ABPA President  
[troy@speackbackflow.com](mailto:troy@speackbackflow.com)

Bruce Rathburn – past ABPA President  
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## How to join the ABPA-SA Chapter

There are two ways to join the San Antonio Chapter of the American Backflow Prevention Association.

The easiest way is to click on the QR Code and follow the instructions to set up your account and be presented with an invoice that you can pay with a credit card on-line or check the box to pay with a check. If you don't use QR Codes, click on this address. <https://www.abpa.org/page/Join> **IMPORTANT** Be sure to select the chapter/s (San Antonio Chapter) you want to join before selecting the payment method. If you elect to pay with a check, you will be able to print the invoice so you can send it with your check to the address on the invoice. If you pay with a credit card on-line, you will be able to print a receipt.

**Click QR Code to Join**



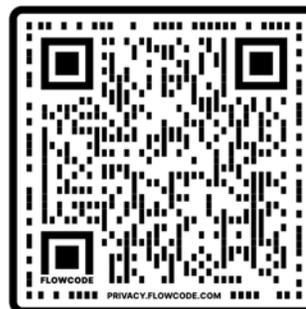
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## How to renew your ABPA-SA Chapter Membership

There are two ways to renew your San Antonio Chapter membership of the American Backflow Prevention Association.

The easiest way is to click on the QR Code and follow the instructions to renew your membership and sign into your account and follow the instructions. If you don't use QR Codes, click on this address. <https://www.abpa.org/page/RenewNow> The program will present you with an invoice that you can pay with a credit card on-line or check the box to pay with a check. **IMPORTANT** Be sure the chapter/s (San Antonio Chapter) is/are selected that you want to renew before selecting the payment method. If you elect to pay with a check, you will be able to print the invoice so you can send it with your check to the address on the invoice. If you pay with a credit card on-line, you will be able to print a receipt.

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**Thank You for Your Membership**



# APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

- US Membership \$65
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  - Sustaining Membership \$300.00
  - New Member
- Renewal - Member # \_\_\_\_\_

To join the American Backflow Prevention Association, simply fill out the membership application form and mail it with your check to the address listed below, or if paying by credit card you may fax the completed form to 979.846.7607. Local chapters have additional fees. Below is a listing of chapters by region. To find out if there is a local chapter in your area, please review the chapter information on our website at [abpa.org](http://abpa.org) or call the National Office at 979.846.7606. **Membership in the Association constitutes paying National dues.**

### Sustaining Member:

- Must be a company or organization
- Assign only one person as the member of ABPA
- A Sustaining Member must submit a letter that designates their Voting Representative.

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How would you like to receive your Membership Renewal Invoice Notification?  Email  US Mail (Not available for International Membership)

## Local Chapter Dues Listed by Region

<p><b>REGION 1</b></p> <p>New England \$12.00 Rhode Island 18.00</p> <p><b>REGION 2</b></p> <p>Virginia \$25.00</p> <p><b>REGION 3</b></p> <p>Carolinas \$10.00 Florida Suncoast 12.00 Peach State "1788" 30.00 Tennessee 20.00</p> <p><b>REGION 4</b></p> <p>Arkansas \$10.00 Central Texas 20.00 Corpus Christi 23.00 Lower Rio Grande Valley 25.00 North Texas 23.00 San Antonio 60.00</p>	<p><b>REGION 5</b></p> <p>Colorado \$15.00 Utah 12.00</p> <p><b>REGION 6</b></p> <p>Arizona \$20.00 Central Coast 10.00 Central Valley California 10.00 Hawaii 23.00 Silver State 23.00 Southern California 15.00</p> <p><b>REGION 7</b></p> <p>Oregon \$20.00 SRC4 20.00</p> <p><b>REGION 8 (USD)</b></p>	<p><b>REGION 9 (USD)</b></p> <p><b>REGION 10</b></p> <p><b>REGION 11</b></p> <p>Indiana BPA \$25.00 Michigan 40.00 Northern Illinois 23.00</p> <p><b>REGION 12</b></p> <p>Eastern Nebraska \$10.00</p>
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**Please make checks payable to:** ABPA  
6672 S 1570 W, West Jordan, UT  
(801) 436-7238  
Email: [membership@abpa.org](mailto:membership@abpa.org)