

The Direct Connection



A newsletter dedicated to Cross Connection Control and Backflow Prevention www.abpa-sa.org

August Vol. 42 Issue 8

July ABPA-SA Program - Laredo's Cross Connection Contamination Event Katherine McGlaughlin – TCEQ Cross Connection Control Program Coordinator

The City of Laredo experienced a major contamination event involving positive coliform samples pulled throughout a large portion of Laredo's distribution system. TCEQ's investigative team spent several days making detailed cross connection surveys throughout Laredo and found over 200 unprotected cross connections.

Katherine presented an excellent, detailed overview of the Laredo Contamination event and the independent cross connections found while conducting cross connection surveys on various facilities.

The presentation described many of the cross connections discovered with detailed descriptions and resolutions. Although the absolute source of the extensive contamination event was not determined, the surveys and resulting education of Laredo's city managers highlighted the many issues that required corrective enforcement measures.

Katherine pointed out that Laredo's cross connection control program was very inadequate and would be under continuous TCEQ review.

Software and Local Enforcement Agency Issues

There appears to be an issue with some software companies and the interaction between Backflow testers and local enforcement agencies.

Frustrating testers are problems associated with trying to update an installation and/or locating assemblies. When testers try to communicate with the software company on particular situations many times they are told to contact the local enforcement agency. This is where the issue comes in that the local enforcement agency does not answer the phone, which results in corrective measures not being resolved as necessary. Some of the issues have gone on for over a year without being solved.

A suggestion to possibly solve this problem would be a round table discussion between some testers, the software company and local CCC enforcement agency management. All issues could be detailed and proposed changes to fix the problems that testers seem to be continually dealing with.

It is not unusual for changes to be suggested and made with any project involving various companies and organizations.

Gauge Testing: For your free ABPA-SA gauge certification for current ABPA-SA members, take your gauge to BAVCO's location in San Antonio. Upon arrival tell them you are with ABPA-SA and there for the free gauge certification. You will fill out a form at the counter and leave your gauge, returning to pick it up at a later time.

August 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 August 14, 2025

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

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

**Meeting Presenter: Bruce Rathburn
Presentation: "Backflow Rules & Regulations"**

**No alcoholic
beverages allowed**

Next meeting date: September 11, 2025

Last meeting thanks to:

**Katherine McLaughlin
with TCEQ for her
detailed presentation
on the Laredo water
contamination event.**

August 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 from any City personnel present.
 - 3. Training program for the evening.
 - 4. Raffle prize drawing.

**Report known backflow incidents to
info@speackbackflow.com.**

***Upcoming September 27th is PHCC's
30th Annual Fishing Tournament.
See PHCC-SA advertisement on
following page(s).**

"Direct Talk" by the President

The September 11th 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.

Trinidad *Chairez*

Here is a good website for emergency information: www.sanantonio.gov/emergency/

MINUTES SAN ANTONIO CHAPTER-ABPA GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING Thursday, July 10, 2025

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS – PRESENT	EXECUTIVE OFFICERS – PRESENT
Trinidad Chairez - President; Jeff Stricker - V. Pres.	Art Trejo - Treasurer/Membership
Greg Shean - Secretary	
Keith Waldrep – Past President	
OFFICERS SPECIAL TO THE CHAPTER – PRESENT	OFFICERS SPECIAL TO THE CHAPTER - ABSENT
Matt Wilgen - Webmaster	Supply Officer - Vacant
Jeff Meeks - Sgt. At Arms	Joe Young - Program Director
Carl Michaud – Gauge Testing/Certification	

DIRECTORS AT LARGE – PRESENT	DIRECTORS AT LARGE – ABSENT
Robert Stricker - 2 years	Jeff Hoffman - 2 years
Bruce Rathburn - 2 years	
Bob Clark - 1 year	GUEST PRESENT: Katherine McGlaughlin,
Fred Baird - 1 year	TCEQ Cross Connection Control Program

Agenda Item #1. Trini 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 June 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. Our bank account balance will be maintained at the current level so the chapter is prepared for emergencies. INFO.

Agenda Item #4. July ABPA-SA Training Program - Presentation on Laredo's Cross Connection Contamination Event — Katherine McGlaughlin, the TCEQ Cross Connection Control Program Coordinator

The city of Laredo experienced a major contamination event involving positive coliform samples pulled through out a large portion of Laredo's distribution system. TCEQ's investigative team spent several days making detailed cross connection surveys throughout Laredo and found over 200 unprotected cross connections.

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The presentation described many of the cross connections discovered with detailed descriptions and resolutions. Although the absolute source of the extensive contamination event was not determined, the surveys and resulting education of Laredo's city managers highlighted the many issues that required corrective enforcement measures.

Katherine pointed out that Laredo's cross connection control program was very inadequate and would be under continuous TCEQ review.

Agenda Item #5. Meal: ABPA-SA sponsored the meal of Jason's Deli box sandwiches. Art donated and delivered the water and 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 one if there is a no show. INFO.

Agenda Item #6. Raffle: ABPA-SA provided a \$50 cash. INFO.

Agenda Item #7. Training: TCEQ - Katherine McGlaughlin provided the training. See Item #4.

Agenda Item #8. SAWS: Dan Crowley, SAWS Director of Governmental Relations, reported that they are sending delinquency letters to customers who have not had their backflow tested as of May 31, 2025. SAWS will be doing this monthly. INFO. JEFF – OBVIOUSLY I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND THIS AS I HAD YET TO BE NOTIFIED BY ANY OF MY TWO ACCOUNTS (HOAs). FOUND OUT WHY ON MONDAY AND AM NOW GETTING UP TO SPEED WITH BSI. PLEASE UPDATE INPUT TO WHERE IT MAKES SENSE AND IS INFORMATIVE.

Agenda Item #9. Gauge Testing: Carl was on vacation. Call BAVCO and make an appointment to have your gauge tested. INFO.

Agenda Item #10: Newsletter: Fred asked for a "show of hands" of those who read the ABPA-SA June newsletter. He counted eight, down one from last month's nine. He then passed out a black and white copy of the newsletter to those who had not read the newsletter. Fred expressed that emailed newsletters are not read as are hard copies that testers receive and others carry with them.

Agenda Item #11: SB 2702: Fred talked about SB 2702 and asked members to read the SB 2702 newsletter article at least a couple times to understand what passing the bill it could of created. The water purveyors really stood up against it. Passing SB 2702 would set a precedence that could spread to other licenses that would allow others to practice in Texas without getting Texas license certifications. The issue might come up again in the Texas Legislator in two years. Fred passed out a TWUA article that Russell Hamilton, Executive Director TWUA, developed for their next newsletter. The passing of the Bill would of basically circumvented the TCEQ BPAT exam process. Additionally, training manuals that have various test procedures cause issues for the local enforcement agencies, testers and their customers. Local enforcement agencies know one test procedure in Texas – USC Field Test procedures -latest edition!

Agenda Item #12: Hands-On Training: Troy said that the training is scheduled for September 16, 2025 (Tuesday). Five meetings per year, for three years, attendance qualify for the free 8-hour TCEQ required hands-on training. This is for those, whose BPAT expires next year. It is not dependent on meeting CEUs. He has a sign-up sheet. So far we have 21 signed up to attend. Those attending need to go to Bac-Flo Unlimited's web site and look up and print out their CEU's for the past 3 years. Bring those with you on the hands-on day.

Adjournment. Adjourn the meeting at 8:06 PM for the raffle.



Greg Shean - Secretary ABPA San Antonio Chapter

NOTICE

ABPA-SA is saddened by the heartfelt loss of Bill Hamrick, of **ATB SERVICES**.

ATB Services, Inc. has been the Mid-West Instrument factory service center in the San Antonio area since January 1995. Bill's dedication to the Chapter over the years along with the top notch service he always provided to those needing their backflow gauges serviced, will be sorely missed.

The new service center for Mid-West Instrument for the San Antonio branch is **BAVCO**, located at **6017 Randolph Blvd, San Antonio, TX 78233**.

Phone (210) 451-7564. You may also contact them through (866) 318-0274.

- ABPA-SA Hands-on Training: Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2025 -

Members who have attended at least 5 meetings per year and have accumulated a minimum of 16 hours are eligible to attend the free hands-on training course sponsored by Bac-Flo Unlimited. Member is required to print out and provide their TCEQ license record the morning of the course. Look up your license under 'View License Hours' on the homepage of Bac-Flo Unlimited's website.

Quote of the Day:

Get your facts first, then you can distort them as you please.

Mark Twain (1835-1910)

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.

RECIPE

Oklahoma Delight...

- 1 - 9 oz. Cool Whip
- 1 - Sm. Strawberry Jello
- 1 - Lg. Cottage Cheese
- 1 - Can Fruit Cocktail (Drained)
- 1 - Crushed Cocktail (Drained)
- 1 - Cup nuts (optional)

QUIZ

(True or False)

T F 1. An inspector could tell the difference between an R/P and D/C by the loading of #1 check valve.

T F 2. The air inlet valve on a Spill-Resistant Vacuum Breaker must open at 1 psi or greater.

T F 3. With USC Field Test Procedures no reading is obtained on #2 Check Valve.

T F 4. RPZ is the correct (only) abbreviation USC utilizes that describes a reduced pressure principle backflow prevention assembly.

T F 5. The relief valve on an R/P is continuously dripping. The tester takes a reading across #1 check and has a reading of 3.5 psid. The probable issue is a fouled relief valve.

ABPA-SA Board of Directors 2025

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

Special Officers to the Association

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

Directors at Large

Two-year term

1. Jeff Hoffman
2. Bruce Rathburn
3. Robert Stricker

One-year term

4. Fred Baird
5. Robert (Bob) Clark

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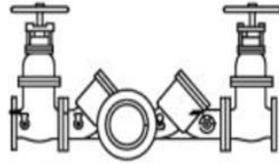
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**ONE
YEAR**
(11 Issues)

NOTICE: Mail Address: ABPA-SA - P.O. Box 47820 - San Antonio, TX 78265

Answers 1. False, 2. True, 3. True, 4. False, 5. False

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PHCC-SAN ANTONIO CALENDAR

**10
JUL**

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 CONTACT PHCC-SA FOR DETAILS: [HTTPS://WWW.PHCC-SANANTONIO.ORG/](https://www.phcc-sanantonio.org/)



**6-8
AUG**

PHCC TEXAS ANNUAL CONFERENCE

HYATT HILL COUNTRY RESORT, SAN ANTONIO, TX 78251
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 APPRENTICESHIP CONTEST, NETWORKING

CHECK WEBSITE FOR MORE INFO: [HTTPS://PHCC-TX.ORG](https://phcc-tx.org)



**14
SEP**

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

MAGGIANO'S LITTLE ITALY 17603 I-10
 SAN ANTONIO, TX 78257
 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM



**27
SEP**

PHCC-SA PERRY BEYER JR. MEMORIAL FISHING TOURNAMENT

FULTON CONVENTION CENTER
 402 N. FULTON BEACH, FULTON, TX 78358
 6:00 AM - 2:00 PM



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ABPA-SA member benefits include:

- -- Hands-on training every three years
- -- Annual gauge certification
- -- TCEQ license credits earned
- -- Monthly meeting meal
- -- State/local updates & valuable knowledge
- -- Opportunity to serve on Board of Directors
- -- Support and company recognition



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Editors include: Fred Baird, Bruce Rathburn, Robert Stricker, Joff Hoffman, Troy Baird

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americanbackflowh2o@gmail.com

Troy Baird – ABPA President
info@speackbackflow.com



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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



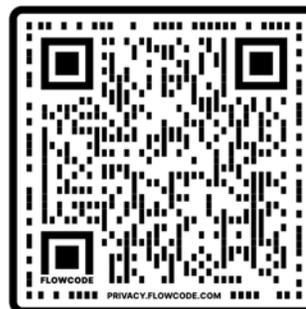
The other way is to print the Membership Application on the next page and send it to the address at the bottom of the page with your check.

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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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 or call the National Office at 979.846.7606. **Membership in the Association constitutes paying National dues.**

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- 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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