

# The Direct Connection



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

April Vol. 49 Issue 4

## - Recycle Water and Potable Water Service Protection Required -

TCEQ RG 478 Feb. 2026

TCEQ Section 344.65 Reclaimed Water

Reclaimed water may be utilized in landscape irrigation if:

**344.65(4)** – The domestic potable water line providing water to the site is connected using an air gap or a reduced pressure principle backflow prevention assembly in accordance with 290.47 (f) of this title (relating to Appendices).

**344.65(6)** - Backflow prevention of the reclaimed water supply line shall be in accordance with the regulations of the water purveyor.

TCEQ Section 344.1. Definitions

**344.1(1) Air Gap** – The unobstructed vertical distance through the free atmosphere between the lowest opening from any pipe or faucet conveying water to a tank, fixture, receptor, sink, or other assembly and the flood level rim of the receptacle. The vertical, physical separation must be at least twice the diameter of the water supply outlet, but never less than 1.0 inch.

**There is confusion with the above - some think separating the potable water service from recycle by 10’ provides an air gap separation.** This is not an air gap separation as noted above and can create cross connection issues in the future, with the potable water service being interconnected with the on-site recycle water line. Through the years there are many documented events where the piping system on site was modified in such a manner that a cross connection was created and a contamination event occurred with potable water system, both on site and the public water supply.

We are hearing of some subdivisions installing the potable service and recycle service as mentioned above and being approved by the administrative authority. The backflow protection recommended in AWWA M24 “Planning for the Distribution of Reclaimed Water”, the USC Foundation of Cross Connection Control and Hydraulic Research and the American Society of Sanitary Engineering (ASSE) is an RP or Air Gap Separation on the potable water service.

**The separation of the piping systems is an approved alternative to the RP and Air Gap Separation; however, this must be monitored to ensure a cross connection has not been created. Basic Question: Enforcement agencies that have allowed recycle to be installed with the 10’ separation, as mentioned above, how are these sites being monitored? Annually by the local enforcement agency (water purveyor)? Who is monitoring the water purveyor to ensure compliance as recommended in AWWA M24 – “Planning for the Distribution of Reclaimed Water?”**

## April Meeting Details

Meetings of the San Antonio Chapter of ABPA are held the second Thursday of every month except December. Dinner and refreshments are served beginning at 5:30 p.m. with the meeting starting at 6:00.

**Date:** Thursday April 9, 2026

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

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

### Meeting Sponsor and Training:

Mike Lueck with 'Mid-West Instrument'

**Presentation Title:** Analog and Digital Backflow Test Kits

**No Alcoholic Beverages Allowed**

**Next meeting date:** May 14th, 2026

### **Last meeting Thanks to:**

Brad Curtis with Hugh M. Cunningham Companies for the presentation on Cross-Connection Control and Backflow Prevention.



## **April Agenda**

- 5:00 pm General discussion / quorum confirmation - Call Meeting to Order
- 5:01 pm Secretary's Report. Read and approve the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 5:05 pm Treasurer's Report. Discussion and approval of the treasurer's report.
- 5:10 pm Vice President's, Directors', and any other reports for the good of the chapter. Comments, new business, any discussion.
- 5:15 pm Training Report. Training & Meal Sponsors
- 5:20 p.m. Webmaster Report
- 5:25 pm President's Report. New & old business
- 5:30 p.m. Meal is served.
- 6:00 pm 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.

## **GAUGE FOR SALE:**

### **Backflow Test Kit and Customer List**

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## **Quote of the Month:**

Gifts are like hooks.  
*Martial (40?-102?)*

## "Direct Talk" by the President

The May 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 approximately 5:00 PM with the meal beginning at 5:30 and meeting at 6:00 PM.

*Jeff Stricker*

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## MINUTES

### ABPA - SAN ANTONIO CHAPTER GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING Thursday, March 12, 2026

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

DIRECTORS AT LARGE – PRESENT	DIRECTORS AT LARGE – ABSENT
Robert Stricker - 2 years	Jeff Hoffman - 2 years
Bruce Rathburn - 2 years	
Bob Clark - 1 year	
Fred Baird - 1 year	
GUESTS PRESENT: Brad Curtis, Regional Rep. for Hugh M. Cunningham	

**Agenda Item #1.** Jeff started the meeting by asking that everyone turn off their cell phones. He then asked if there were any problems with the meal RSVP e-mail and the newsletter. Jeff said he is self-learning our website software so that it works with the new host software. He showed the progress he has made and that "more stuff" will be coming. He also wants to add "more stuff" to the newsletter. He asked the members to go to our website, [abpa-sa.org](http://abpa-sa.org), and give him feedback. OPEN.

**Agenda Item #2.** Secretary's Report: The February minutes were in the newsletter. Keith made a motion to accept. Robert came in second again. Passed. INFO.

**Agenda Item #3.** Treasurer's Report: Art said that members must be registered and current at National and the chapter. Art's membership list will have your BPAT chapter expiration date. If your CEU sign up line is red, your chapter and National BPAT has expired. If green, it will expire at the end of the month. The members should also check their National annual renewal date on the National website, [abpa.org](http://abpa.org) - National plus chapter dues are \$125 per year. Go to the National website or our newsletter on how to become a member or renew your memberships. No membership, no CEUs. INFO.

**Agenda Item #4.** Meeting Sponsor: Hugh M. Cunningham and Associates sponsored the meeting meal of a Jason Deli sandwich of choice of ham, roast beef, turkey, or tuna sandwiches, with 1 oz chips, and a cookie. The chapter provided sodas and water. INFO.

**Agenda Item #5.** Supply: Art brought in an extensive selection of the remaining chapter attire with sizes and prices. Get yours before they are gone. The only reorder will be caps. INFO.

**Agenda Item #6.** Raffle: Hugh Cunningham and Associates sponsored a raffle prize of a \$50 credit card for the winning member who can buy something that requires work. A cash prize also works. INFO.

**Agenda Item #7.** Newsletter: There were no questions about the newsletter. INFO.

**Agenda Item #8.** TCEQ. Fred reported that in January 2026 - TCEQ published the revised RG-478 "Establishing and Managing an Effective Cross-Connection Control Program." Included were a few modifications that brought the document up to existing conditions and situations.

One was Bill Hamrick's ethics statement, went through TCEQ legal with very few minor changes that will go at the bottom of the state's official T&M. This will be in this month's newsletter. Fred suggested SAWS have BSI place this statement in the SAWS T&M. He also stated, "There were a number of recommendations that came out of our work group meetings that need to be established for quality control over the CCC Program". INFO.

**Agenda Item #9.** Training: Brad Curtis will give presentation on: CCC & Backflow Prevention. INFO.

**Agenda Item #10.** SAWS: Residential Irrigation. SAWS and BSI deactivated residential irrigation backflow assemblies around the time that BSI began managing T&M forms in the January 2025 time frame. The unintended consequence of this was that high hazard irrigation assemblies with OSSF onsite, were included in this deactivation. This resulted in tests on those assemblies not being accepted by BSI, and some testers adding those assemblies in duplicate to BSI.

BSI has reactivated all residential irrigation low and high hazard backflow assemblies. There are 7,414 residential irrigation assemblies that were re-activated. This included approx. 1,393 double check and pressure vacuum breaker assemblies. High hazards (backflow assemblies) are required to be tested annually. Low hazard residential irrigation backflow assemblies are required to be tested at least every three years. This is consistent with other water suppliers and acceptable to TCEQ, and BSI will accept a test at any time. Testers should continue to test residential irrigation assemblies and submit the T&M forms to BSI. INFO.

**Agenda Item #11.** SAWS Spring Bloom: This annual event at SAWS, will be this weekend. Bruce said this is one opportunity to educate people regarding hose bib vacuum breakers. Licensees onsite will help homeowners identify their current irrigation backflow protection. Keith will bring some hose bib vacuum breakers and backflow cutaways. Bruce will check with Troy on Irrigation literature. Jeff asked for volunteers and received 5. OPEN.

**Agenda Item #12.** Gauge Testing: Carl told the members to tell BAVCO that you are with the ABPA-SA Chapter to assure you won't receive a \$95 invoice when getting your gauge back. Take the better white copy as Carl will pick up the other two to check membership. Call BAVCO ahead if you need immediate gauge certification. You are allowed one potable and one non potable certification in one calendar year. INFO.

**Agenda Item #13.** ABPA National. Bruce, National ABPA Treasurer, reminded everyone that the 41st ABPA Conference will be at the Orleans, May 4th through 6th. Early bird savings expire on March 17th. INFO.

**Agenda Item #14.** Webmaster: Matt Wilgen will be letting his BPAT expire and will no longer be doing backflow testing and maintaining our website. Matt has been a long-time chapter member and maintained the chapter website for many years saving the chapter considerable expense. All our thanks go out to Matt. INFO.

**Agenda Item #15.** Training: Brad Curtis gave the presentation on Cross-Connection Control & Backflow Prevention. Brad had cross section schematics involving a home and appropriate piping to illustrate the definitions. First of the definitions: What is a Cross-Connections? According to the Environmental Protection Agency, actual or potential connections between a potable and non-potable water source. Types of Cross-Connections? Direct Cross-Connection is a cross-connection which is subject to both backsiphonage and backpressure. Indirect Cross-Connection is a cross-connection which is subject to backsiphonage only.

What is Backflow? The unwanted reverse flow of liquid, gases, or other substance into a potable water distribution system. What is Backsiphonage? Backflow caused by a negative or sub-atmospheric pressure in the distribution piping of the potable water supply. What is Backpressure? Backflow caused by an increase of pressure in the downstream piping system, creating a reversal in the normal direction of flow. Brad then showed a complex multistory, home, and company and where appropriate Backflow prevention products must be installed. He provided discussion of various scenarios/backflow preventer types. Typical installations as the area having jurisdiction having authority to dictate requirements used for an application.

Total Backflow Protection: A complete backflow prevention program consists of isolation and containment protection. Isolation: Typically inside the property after the meter. Backflow prevention protection provided at each fixture or appliance outlet, typically governed by state/municipality/local plumbing codes. Containment: A water supplier's backflow prevention policy of installing protection (backflow preventer) after the public distribution system service connection and prior to any branch of the water distribution system. Typically installed immediately after the meter. Total backflow prevention assures safe drinking water from the point of treatment to the point of use by combining both of the above.

A "Contaminant", when introduced into the potable water system, constitutes a direct threat to life or health of a human, if the substance was ingested through consumption, or if the substance came in contact with the skin. A contaminant can therefore be a caustic chemical, a fluid containing bacteria or disease, or any other substance which could threaten human health. Therefore, contaminants compose a high degree of hazard to the potable water system. A contaminant is considered a High or Health Hazard.

A "Pollutant" is any substance which may affect the color, taste or odor of the potable water, but which does not pose a direct threat to human health through exposure or consumption of the water. Pollutants may impose an objectionable odor or appearance to the water, but do not in themselves pose a health threat, and therefore are considered to be a low hazard. A pollutant is considered a Low or Non-Health Hazard.

How can pollutants or contaminants enter into the water distribution system? In order for pollutants or contaminants to enter the drinking water system due to a backflow event, a number of factors must be present: a cross connection must exist, a source of pollution or contamination must be present, and the existence of a backpressure or backsiphonage hydraulic condition.

Brad then described how a backflow incident/water contamination requires a cross connection (indirect or direct), hydraulic condition (backsiphonage or backpressure, and hazard (non-health or health).

He then went through the use for containment versus isolation protection, the type of protection, type of hazard protection, type of acceptable pressure, testing methods, and type of installation for a double check valve assembly, reduced pressure zone assembly, a double check detector assembly, and a reduced pressure detector assembly. Brad provided illustration and described each.

Additionally he had many pictures of the different type backflow assembly security and freeze protection enclosures. An extensive review was presented. The members had many inputs on the advantages and disadvantages because of their experience is confronting pouches, cages, metal insulation, plastic box enclosures, and aluminum enclosures in their backflow testing. Below: member's comments.

Pouches: Good, just seal up bottom. 2 hours below freezing – will need heat tape. For cages use pouch.

Metal Insulation: Effective, usability addressed. Workability, can be issue. Looks nice. Plastic box

enclosures: Plastic box – fake rocks - owner risk. Does not come "with rocks." Aluminum enclosures: Doors removable, insulation can flake off. Larger, pricey. Now, have better products. Polymer concrete foundation / cage – no forms no second trips. Anchor down padlock, insulated heat tape. Misc & Advice: The right term for RP: RP. No such thing as an RPZ. Rush to get things insulated and protected and ready for winter.

Adjournment. Adjourn the meeting at 7:27 PM for the raffle.



Greg Shean - Secretary ABPA-SA

## **Chapter Chatter** - Greg Shean, Still Secretary with no Term Limits

*SAWS Spring Bloom.* The San Antonio Water System, a city-owned utility, sponsored this annual event at SAWS on March 14th from 9 AM to noon. The focus is usually on native and low-water-use plants, which are available for sale from master gardeners and garden clubs, whose free advice is also available. This is the place to be if you are into any type of gardening. ABPA-SA sets up its booth annually and gets a lot of interest in the hose bib vacuum breakers and what they do to protect our water. These were provided by our partners Hugh M. Cunningham and Associates. In addition, the San Antonio Irrigation Association had a booth for educating people on the use and function of an irrigation system. SAWS has many tables presenting their conservation programs and rebates. Despite the Spurs winning championships and influx from other states, the San Antonio population has increased, but the water consumption has not. Of which, SAWS is very proud. For Spring Bloom show information, go to <https://www.saws.org/SpringBloom>.

## **Recipe - Mushrooms in Red Wine**

*8 oz. Mushrooms (sliced)*  
*2 Cloves Garlic (crushed)*  
*1 Table Spoon Olive Oil*  
*1 Table Spoon Butter*  
*1/4 Cup Red Wine*  
*Salt / Pepper to Taste*  
*Parsley for Garnish*  
*Saute in Olive Oil, Butter, Red Wine*

## **QUIZ - True or False**

T F 1. A 12" backflow prevention assembly should be fully assembled upon shipment and delivery to the construction site where installation will take place.

T F 2. An Air Break is legitimate high hazard backflow protection recognized for protecting the potable water supply.

T F 3. A PVB has a quick closing solenoid valve downstream. This creates a back-pressure condition and the installation would require an R/P.

T F 4. A car wash has reclaimed water installed with purple piping and an RP installed on the potable water make-up line. The BPAT should use a Potable backflow test kit to test the assembly.

T F 5. Plumbing codes require an RP on ice machines.

## ABPA-SA Board of Directors 2026

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

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- 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 - Art Trejo
- 11) Webmaster – Matthew Wilgen
- 12) Newsletter - Troy Baird

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2. Bruce Rathburn
3. Robert Stricker

#### One-year term

4. Fred Baird
5. Robert (Bob) Clark

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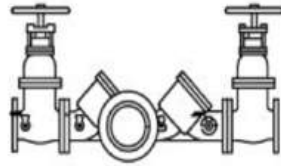
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YEAR**  
(11 Issues)

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

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## PHCC-SAN ANTONIO CALENDAR

**20**  
MAR

### Contractor Training w/ASC Engineered Solutions

7:00 AM - 8:00 AM

Location: **PMI Sales & Marketing**, 1924 Shipman Dr. SATX 78219



**26**  
MAR

### Golf Mixer: Food, Drinks, Par 3 & Putt-Putt

4:30 PM - 7:30 PM (Members/Nonmembers welcomed to participate)

Location: **San Pedro Golf Course**, 6102 San Pedro Ave, San Antonio, TX 78216



**9**  
APR

### Monthly Membership Meeting

11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Location: **Northern Hills Golf Course Venue**, 13202 Scarsdale, SATX 78217

Guest Speaker: Harold Moret, Copper Development Assoc.



**7**  
MAY

### PHCC-SA 13th Annual Golf Tournament

8:30 AM Shotgun

Location: **Northern Hills Golf Course Venue**, 13202 Scarsdale, SATX 78217



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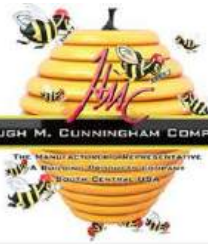
  
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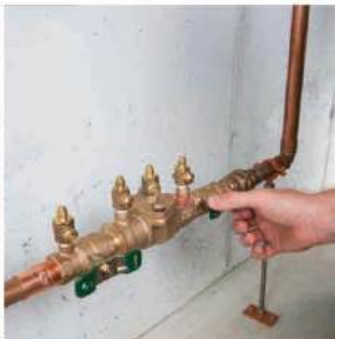
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There are two ways to join the San Antonio Chapter of the American Backflow Prevention Association.

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.

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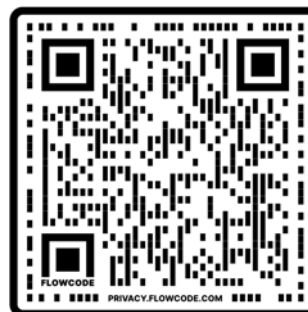
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There are two ways to renew your San Antonio Chapter membership of the American Backflow Prevention Association.

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

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

## Please Print Legibly or Type

Mr., Mrs., Ms., etc \_\_\_\_\_ First Name \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name (Include suffix) \_\_\_\_\_

Organization (Agency/Firm) \_\_\_\_\_ Department/Division \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State / Prov \_\_\_\_\_ Zip + 4 Code/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

ABPA-SA \_\_\_\_\_ \$ 60.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Local Chapter (if joining a local chapter) \_\_\_\_\_ Local Dues Amount \_\_\_\_\_

## Method of Payment

- Charge \$ 125.00 to my  Visa  MasterCard  American Express  Discover  Check  Money Order  Invoice Me

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Card Expires (MM/YYYY) \_\_\_\_\_ CVC Number \_\_\_\_\_

Name as it appears on card \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

## Additional Information

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

<b>REGION 1</b>		<b>REGION 5</b>		<b>REGION 9 (USD)</b>
New England	\$12.00	Colorado	\$15.00	
Rhode Island	18.00	Utah	12.00	<b>REGION 10</b>
<b>REGION 2</b>		<b>REGION 6</b>		<b>REGION 11</b>
Virginia	\$25.00	Arizona	\$20.00	Indiana BPA
<b>REGION 3</b>		Central Coast	10.00	Michigan
Carolinas	\$10.00	Central Valley California	10.00	Northern Illinois
Florida Suncoast	12.00	Hawaii	23.00	
Peach State "1788"	30.00	Silver State	23.00	<b>REGION 12</b>
Tennessee	20.00	Southern California	15.00	Eastern Nebraska
<b>REGION 4</b>		<b>REGION 7</b>		
Arkansas	\$10.00	Oregon	\$20.00	
Central Texas	20.00	SRC4	20.00	
Corpus Christi	23.00	<b>REGION 8 (USD)</b>		
Lower Rio Grande Valley	25.00			
North Texas	23.00			
San Antonio	60.00			

**Please make checks payable to:** ABPA  
 6672 S 1570 W, West Jordan, UT  
 (801) 436-7238  
 Email: [membership@abpa.org](mailto:membership@abpa.org)