



Iowa Department of Public Health Bureau of Environmental Health Services

Overview: This guide reviews Frequently Asked Questions regarding requirements for persons installing, repairing or testing backflow prevention assemblies that are part of a fire sprinkler system.

This FAQ was developed jointly by the Iowa Department of Public Health, Division of Environmental Health and the Iowa Department of Public Safety, State Fire Marshall's Office.

Q: Where does a fire sprinkler system begin?

A: A fire sprinkler system begins at the point at which the first component that is attached to the water service line for the sprinkler system is required to meet a certification requirement listed in NFPA 13, Standard for the Installation of Sprinkler Systems. The backflow preventer would therefore be included since it must be included in the hydraulic calculations for the sprinkler system and carry listing and features specific to the sprinkler system requirements of NFPA 13.

Q: Does the installer of a backflow prevention assembly as part of a fire sprinkler system have to be a licensed plumber?

A: No. If it is a fire sprinkler system that is covered under the State Fire Marshal's regulations and would not be considered part of a building's plumbing system governed by the state plumbing code the installer does not have to be licensed through the Plumbing and Mechanical Systems Board (PMSB) to install, test or repair a fire sprinkler system. The person does have to be a licensed contractor endorsed by the Iowa State Fire Marshal per Iowa Administrative Code 661, Ch. 275.

Q: What credentials are required for a person testing or repairing a backflow prevention device that is part of a fire sprinkler system?

A: The person must be registered as a backflow prevention assembly tester with the Iowa Department of Public Health. Iowa Administrative Code 641, Ch. 26.3 states that no person shall test or repair a backflow prevention assembly unless the person is a registered backflow prevention assembly tester.

AND

The person must be a certified fire extinguishing system contractor endorsed by the Iowa State Fire Marshall's Office. Iowa Administrative Code 661 Ch. 275 states that a person acting in the capacity of layout, testing, maintenance and inspection of a fire sprinkler system shall be a licensed contractor endorsed by the Iowa State Fire Marshal.

Contacts:

Iowa Department of Public Health
Backflow Prevention Assembly Tester Registration Program
Randy Lane (515) 281-5894
http://www.idph.state.ia.us/eh/backflow_prevention.asp

State Plumbing Code
John Kelly (515) 724-9961
<http://www.idph.state.ia.us/PMSB/Code.aspx>

Iowa Department of Public Safety
State Fire Marshall Division
Building Code Bureau
(515) 725-6145
Building Code: <http://www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/building/index.shtml>
Fire Extinguishing and Suppression System Contractor and Installer Certification:
<http://www.dps.state.ia.us/fm/building/fescpc/index.shtml>