



STAFF REPORT

Meeting Type: Board of Directors
Title: Update on Cross-Connection Control Program
From: Paul Sellier, Director of Water Resources
Through: Ben Horenstein, General Manager
Meeting Date: July 1, 2025

PS
BH

TYPE OF ITEM: Action X Information

RECOMMENDATION: Receive an update on the District's cross-connection control program

SUMMARY: In California, all public water systems are required by law to administer and operate a cross-connection control program, often referred to as a backflow program. The primary objective of the cross-connection control program is to protect water quality by preventing backflow of contaminants into the distribution system. In December 2023, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) adopted the Cross-Connection Control Policy Handbook that replaced requirements of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations governing backflow prevention and cross-connection control. Staff will present an overview of the District's existing cross-connection control program and expected changes required due to the updated regulations.

DISCUSSION: Cross-connections or backflow can occur when water that has passed through a customer's meter flows back into the distribution system usually via a customer's meter. There are many specific situations that can result in a backflow event, but in general, backflow will occur when the pressure in the distribution pipeline is lower than the pressure in the customer's plumbing. Distribution pipeline pressure can be reduced, for example, by the sudden operation of a hydrant or a main break, or it may be that a homeowner operates a pressurized system such as a well or pumped fire system that can exceed the regular distribution system pressure.

Marin Water has operated a Cross-Connection Control Program since the mid-1980s, with the first ordinance dated 1983, based on the requirements of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations. On December 19, 2023, the State Board adopted the Cross-Connection Control Policy Handbook, which replaced requirements of Title 17 related to backflow prevention and cross-connection control. The State Board requires that each public water system submit a written Cross-Connection Control Plan for State Board review and approval by July 1, 2025. The plan must address all requirements listed in the Policy Handbook and ensure ongoing compliance through site inspections, testing of backflow prevention assemblies, and enforcement. While the majority of the District's existing cross-connection

control program meets the requirements of the updated regulations, staff will present an overview of the expected program changes required due to the recent regulatory updates.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW: Not applicable.

FISCAL IMPACT: None.

ATTACHMENT(S): None.