CITY OF LA CROSSE

WATER & SEWER UTILITIES OFFICE

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In the next few weeks the La Crosse Water Utility will be implementing a meter exchange and cross-connection control (CCC) program for residential properties.

Residential cross-connection control will be a new program for La Crosse and is being implemented to comply with regulatory requirements from the Wisconsin DNR and Department of Public Safety and Professional Services (formerly Department of Commerce). The Water Utility will be partnering with Hydro Designs, Inc. (HDI), of New Berlin, WI, to provide general management of the program. In addition to performing the actual residential CCC inspections, HDI will schedule appointments, provide public information & education, send follow-up compliance letters, and generally provide and maintain documentation required by the program. Where additional backflow prevention is required, HDI will also make recommendations for the installation of backflow prevention devices or assemblies.

The cross-connection control program is designed to detect and eliminate possible sources of contamination that can backflow from a property to the public water supply. Backflow can occur in the event that the public water system loses pressure, or if pressure from property exceeds that of the public system. Potential sources of contamination from residential properties include dishwashers, toilets, pressure washers, boilers, pools, hose connections and lawn sprinkler systems.

The cross-connection program, as required by current DNR regulation, must include several components:

- Public Education – Every residential inspection will provide educational information to the person responsible for the property. There are many other sources of information describing cross-connection control, including the Water Utility page of the City website (www.cityoflacrosse.org), as well as the HDI website (www.hydrodesignsinc.com).

- Notices to Property Owners – Appointment request letters will be mailed by HDI to customers using current address information provided by the Water Utility.

- Cross-connection inspections – Plumbing systems in residential properties that are connected to the public water supply must be inspected to the extent required by DNR code to determine if cross connections exist. Residential CCC inspections will be coordinated with the normal schedule for water meter replacement. A minimum of 700 meter exchanges & CCC inspections per year will be completed until all residential properties have been addressed.

  The residential CCC inspection will survey the property's water system piping in the vicinity of the water meter, and will also include all hose connections. The HDI inspection will provide informational material, describing other potential cross-connection sources, to the person responsible for the building. With the completion of the inspection HDI will provide a report to indicate compliance, or to describe CCC violations or issues that need to be addressed. The report will include a time frame for compliance. A person responsible for the property must be available during the inspection to provide access, answer questions, and sign the inspection report form. HDI will also send letters to follow-up and verify that corrective action has been taken. The Water Utility will work with the City Building & Inspection Department if enforcement of the CCC program is necessary.

- Installation of protective devices – Based on the results of the inspection backflow prevention devices or assemblies will be required to address unprotected cross connections, per current WI Department of Public Safety and Professional Services requirements. As part of the CCC inspection, up to four vacuum breakers will be supplied to address issues related to hose bib connections. All other measures or devices needed to address additional unprotected cross connections must be installed at the owner's expense.

- Annual testing – Owners of backflow prevention assemblies are required to have the devices tested annually by a State of Wisconsin certified tester.

- Record keeping – A current record of the cross–connection control program must be maintained and made available for annual review by the DNR.

The Water Utility has scheduled an informational meeting to discuss the cross-connection control program with customers and answer questions. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 19, 2011, from 6:00 – 7:00 PM, in the 3rd floor conference room of City Hall.

Questions regarding the residential cross-connection control program may be directed to Hydro Designs, Inc. at 800-315-4305, or the Water Utility office at 608-789-7536.