

## Backflow Instructions

The State of Tennessee requires that residential water systems that are used for irrigation must have a backflow preventer (BFP) installed and inspected annually for correct operation. Every house in the neighborhood has an irrigation system and must be inspected annually. Our neighborhood pays for this inspection as part of the annual assessment. We get a much lower rate from inspectors if we can get all houses done at the same time. Thus, homeowners must have their systems ready for inspection.

### Overlook Inspection Process:

Our neighborhood conducts the inspection once a year in early May. To complete the inspection, your backflow preventer needs to be installed and the water to your irrigation system turned on. If you have two meters and had TN American turn your irrigation water off for the winter, you will have to have it turned back on. This should be accomplished by the end of April.

In early spring you may receive a reminder from Tennessee American that the inspection is required. **If so, please SAVE THE FORM.** It works better if the inspector can use this form for the inspection as it reduces the likelihood of a data entry error. There are account numbers and device numbers on the form that if entered inaccurately will prevent your home from getting credit for the inspection requiring more correspondence (and harassment) between you and Tennessee American.

Your backflow preventer is normally located on the side of your house. Prior to the day of inspection, you should place the form sent to you by Tennessee American in a sealed plastic bag and attach it to the backflow preventer (See Sample image below). If you don't have a form, the inspector will complete the inspection anyway but will only have your address to provide to TN America. I recommend that you write a phone number on your form where you can be reached in case the inspector needs to contact you. He carries common repair items (seals, gaskets, etc) and may repair them for you if you approve via phone approval. You are under no obligation to have the inspector repair your device, however.

### Preparing for Inspection:

As described above, you must install your backflow preventer and turn your water on. Some homes in the neighborhood have one water meter for both home and irrigation uses while others have a separate meter for irrigation. In either case, the BFP must be removed in the fall before freezing temperatures are encountered. **When removing the BFP make sure seals at the connection are retained.**

**Single Meter Procedure:** Those homes with a single meter (you only get 1 water bill) will have a valve located below grade normally near the backflow preventer. Turning this off will block water going to the BFP while still allowing water to get to the house. With this off, you can remove the BFP and store it for the winter in the garage. In the spring, the procedure is the reverse. Install the BFP and turn on the Valve.

Dual Meter Procedure: You have a dual meter if you get two water bills. In this case, you can turn off the water to the irrigation system by turning it off at the meter near the sidewalk. This is easier if you purchase a water turn-off tool at Home Depot or Lowes. To remove the BFP turn off one of the valves in the box near the street. Before removing the BFP make sure you still have water in your house to ensure you have turned off the correct one. Once the water is off, remove the BFP and store it in the garage for winter. In the spring, the procedure is the reverse. Install the BFP and turn on the Valve.

If you need help call me at 423-598-1100

Ray Hanger

TN American Form Attachment

Water Meter Box with Separation Irrigation Account

