

WSSC Regulatory Services Group

Master Plumber & Master Gasfitter Newsletter

E - Permitting (Coming Soon)



WSSC and its software vendor have nearly completed development and configuration of a web based permit system for the plumbing and gasfitting community. Staff is scheduled to begin User Acceptance Testing (UAT) in mid-March and finish towards the end of April. Giving a positive result, WSSC is projecting to announce training for all internal and external users mid-way through UAT. An official roll-out date is not set; but a 'go live' is potentially just a few months away.

This new system features the following web based (online) functionality:

1. Submit and pay for permit applications (short form, long forms, service connections, permit amendments, etc.).
2. Inspections scheduling and real time results.
3. Licensing: new applications, renewals & and status check.

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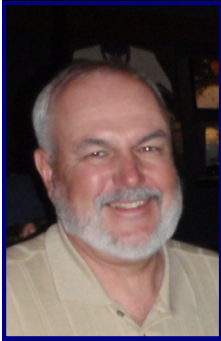
E - Plan Review: (Already Available)

WSSC Plans Review staff is currently requiring plan submittals, containing 20 or more sheets, be submitted electronically. Anyone wishing to voluntarily submit ePlans for smaller projects is highly encouraged to do so.

When the new permitting system goes live, all medium and large plumbing plans will be required to be submitted electronically. In our next announcement, you will be provided with the official rules relating to required electronic submittals verses voluntary. We highly encourage everyone to get acclimated with e-Plan Review now.

Procedure for submittal: After you visit the permit counter, bring your validated permit application form to the plan review counter. A Reviewer will gather some information from you and then you'll receive an email "invite" to upload your electronic plan files; which you can do from the comfort of your office or where ever. All status notifications will be via email. See a Plans Reviewer for more details.

The Enforcer: WSSC licensee's license is REVOKED for 25 years!



Ed James
Plumbing Inspection
Unit Coordinator

Lots of items to cover since the last Newsletter all of which pertain to RSG enforcement actions with both licensed and unlicensed individuals found to be willfully violating WSSC Code provisions.

#1 The most notable case involved a

Virginia based Master Plumber Gasfitter that was providing a Virginia approved Backflow certification program and providing or assisting other plumbers / gasfitters training and taking exams with the testing agency in Virginia. This individual had all of his VA Tradesman Licenses revoked for 25 years along with the closing of two businesses under his direction and control. Several thousands of dollars have been assessed to date and the investigation is on-going at this time.

#2 Thanks to the diligence of the best licensing agent at WSSC (Beverly Houser), it was discovered when one of the Virginia reciprocal licensees trying to renew his WSSC license showed up without his current Virginia license. Per accepted practice it was discovered that his license had been revoked (25years) and was associated with the individual (**#1**) above. His WSSC license has been suspended under provisions of the WSSC Code under Section 115.1.6 License invalidation. Action (revocation) is pending official notification for due process as provided under Section 108.8 and 108.9 of the WSSC Code.

In accordance with WSSC Code the first individual (**#1**) was provided the opportunity to have a hearing (Section 108.9.1) before the WSSC Plumbing Board and waived that right by failing to respond within the timeframe allotted. Subsequently his WSSC **license was revoked for 25 years**. Copies of the WSSC actions along with the Virginia License actions have been submitted to the State of Maryland DLLR and license action is pending at the State level.

It was soon discovered that 25 other WSSC Virginia reciprocating individuals had submitted Backflow certifications from individual **#1**. The Virginia Board of Contractor Consent Order advised that the required 32 hour course was not provided in accordance with State guidelines. Based on this documentation all 25 individuals were placed in the invalid/suspended status. During interviews with 4 of these individuals 4 to 12 hours was the average time spent in the 32 hour course. To date 4 of these individuals have taken a State of Maryland approved 32 hour backflow certification course and had their WSSC license reinstated. The balance of this group will or have been notified and license action is pending.

Please note the following from the WSSC Code:

115.1.6 License Invalidation. A WSSC license issued pursuant to the provisions set forth herein shall become null and void if the applicant's license from the jurisdiction or licensing agency from which it was

reciprocated becomes revoked, suspended, lapsed, or otherwise invalidated.

Two other individuals were each written a total of \$500.00 in civil citations each for engaging in or providing plumbing/gas fitting services without permits inspections and WSSC licenses. One was a WSSC Sewer and Drain Cleaner and the other only has a State of Maryland Apprentice Plumbing and HVAC license. The Apprentice has been reported to the State of Maryland DLLR.

Multiple Notices of Violations have been written to WSSC licensed master plumber/gasfitters for failing to get required inspections of work installed with or without WSSC permits. Included in these violations was the fact the licensed master was allowing unlicensed individuals to perform work without "Eyes on" supervision of the Master or an appropriately licensed journeyman.

I have been made aware that some companies are getting signatures on a document that says they are not responsible for lining chimneys only for the installation of the furnace or water heater. If you turn the gas on you are 100% responsible for **Code Compliance at your expense** and this will be considered a **WILLFUL VIOLATION** subject to civil citations and license action.

Please expect all of the Inspectors to be checking for valid WSSC licenses on any active job site.

Regulatory Services has received multiple complaints from the WSSC

The Enforcer: continued from page 2

Utility Management Group that Master Plumbers and Sewer and Drain cleaners are not reporting off property sewer issues as required by the WSSC Plumbing and Fuel Gas Code. Please review this entire Code Section 102.3.6 with ALL of those people WSSC licensed to perform this function. This Code Section pertains to reporting requirements:

102.3.6.2.4 Commission Notification. If an obstruction causing a stoppage is located in the Commission's service connection, the drain cleaner shall notify the Commis-

sion's Emergency Call Center by telephone, fax, or electronically within 72-hours. If the stoppage was not cleared the drain cleaner shall notify the Commission by telephone immediately. The drain cleaner shall also inform the Commission, in his or her opinion, what the cause of the obstruction was i.e. soft stoppage, broken/misaligned piping, roots, grease, debris, etc.

Link to report form:

<https://www.wsscwater.com/business--construction/regulatory--licensing-services/plumbing-services.html#q12>

*** Failure to properly report a main line sewer blockage to WSSC is a violation of the WSSC Plumbing and Fuel Gas Code. Each occurrence of a Code violation may result in enforcement action taken against the licensee, and may result in the issuance of a civil citation which carries a fine up to \$1,000 per day.

**** AND YOU WILL BE IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER!

Emergency Inspections:

As a reminder, you can review the current procedures for Emergency Plumbing and Fuel Gas Inspections by going to WSSC's web page. Click on the following link or re-type it into your internet browser: <https://www.wsscwater.com/business--construction/regulatory--licensing-services/plumbing-services.html#q2>.

Cross Connection Program Updates:

WSSC has updated its main web pages and in doing so, we were required to re-configure the Cross Connection Test Report application. We certainly apologize for the abrupt nature of the refreshed site; quite frankly it also caught us a little by surprise. It shouldn't have, but it did nevertheless.

One benefit of the new build was the allowance for "alpha" characters to be entered into the required account number field. In the absence of an account number, you can now enter letters in lieu of zeros. Therefore, if a property is served by well water, please type "well" into the account number field. If it is served by City of Bowie, please

type "Bowie" into the field. If the BFPs is for a fire hydrant rental meter, please type "FH Meter" into the field.

One negative, our programmer made owner emails a required field, hopefully by the time you receive this newsletter, that feature will be returned to a voluntary field. However, we will be making this a requirement in the coming months. Imagine if we could send reminder notices (ahead of due dates) as well as past due notices by email in lieu of letters via the US Mail. So please allow this to serve as a first announcement. In order to increase the program's efficiency, please begin the practice of gathering and providing

email addresses for the owners/facility managers. Later, we will announce an official go-live date for this requirement and provide instructions on how to deal with the few folks that do not use email.

One other reminder, plumbers are not to provide their name and/or company information as the contact for the owner. The result is that past due notices are going to the plumber and not the responsible party. Plumbers, this is your final warning regarding this matter; staff has been instructed to forward occurrences to supervisory staff for escalated enforcement.

Cross Connection: Residential Irrigation Systems



Don Smith
Cross Connection
Plumbing Inspector
Supervisor

It's that time of the year once again when irrigation companies are getting geared up to sale and install new irrigation systems to our residential customers. One of their great selling points is, in WSSC's jurisdiction the home owner can get a sub-meter installed which helps them save money on their water bill. While this is a great way for the irrigation companies to promote the sale of their product, most of the times they fail to inform the homeowner of the backflow prevention requirements. A backflow preventer is required on all irrigation systems connected to the potable water system, (whether or not a sub-meter is installed). A test is required at the time of installation and annually at start-up. Maybe this isn't mentioned because it's not a great selling point or the irrigation companies feel that it's the plumber's responsibility to inform the homeowner of the code requirements since he has the permit to install the meter yoke and backflow preventer. Maybe the plumbing companies think

because they are the sub-contractor to the irrigation companies it's not their responsibility to inform the homeowner of anything. Whatever the reasons, the homeowner is left unaware of what is required by the plumbing codes.

Here is what is required by code:

- A copy of every test report must be left on the every job site (residential or comical) code-section 503.5.
- The plumber shall be responsible for notifying the property owner of all permit and inspection requirements associated with the work performed prior to installation, code-section 106.1.2.1. (This is the plumber's opportunity to educate their customers on the annual test requirement for the backflow preventer they have just installed.)
- Most irrigation companies offer start-up and shut-down contracts for the systems they install. The annual backflow test could be included in the cost of the start-up contract since the plumbing codes required the assembly to be tested at that time, code-section 508.2.6.

What is clear, it is everyone's responsibility to inform our customers of the total operating cost of systems installed in their homes (including backflow assembly testing) so they can make an informed and educated decision without the worry of hidden cost.

Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

Please return report online to: WSSC / Cross Connection Control Office
WSSC TEST REPORT # _____
<http://www.wsscwater.com/eng/CrossConnectionControlProgram>

BACKFLOW PREVENTION ASSEMBLY TEST REPORT

INSTALL/TESTER ID: _____ PERMIT # _____ ACCOUNT # _____ **Backflow required**

NAME OF PREMISES: _____ Commercial ☐ Residential ☐

SERVICE ADDRESS: _____ CITY: _____ ZIP: _____

CONTACT PERSON: _____ PHONE: _____ COUNTY: MC ☐ PG ☐

LOCATION OF ASSEMBLY: _____ ASSES: DCVA ☐ RPZA ☐ PVBA ☐ OTHER: _____

DOWNSIDE PROCESS: _____

NEW INSTALLATION ☐ EXISTING ☐ REPLACEMENT ☐ OLD ASSEMBLY SERIAL NUMBER: _____

MAKE OF ASSEMBLY: _____ MODEL: _____ SERIAL NO.: _____ SIZE: _____

INITIAL TEST	DCVA/RPZA CHECK VALVE NO.1	DCVA/RPZA CHECK VALVE NO.2	RPZA	PVBA
PASSED <input type="checkbox"/>	LEAKED <input type="checkbox"/>	LEAKED <input type="checkbox"/>	OPENED AT _____ PSID	AIR INLET _____ PSID
FAILED <input type="checkbox"/>	CLOSED TIGHT <input type="checkbox"/>	CLOSED TIGHT <input type="checkbox"/>	#1 CHECK _____ PSID	NOT OPEN _____
			AIR GAP OK? <input type="checkbox"/>	
NEW PARTS REPAIRS	CLEAN REPLACE PART <input type="checkbox"/>	CLEAN REPLACE PART <input type="checkbox"/>	CLEAN REPLACE PART <input type="checkbox"/>	CHECK VALVE HELD AT _____ PSID
				LEAKED <input type="checkbox"/>
				CLEANED REPAIRED <input type="checkbox"/>
FINAL TEST PASSED <input type="checkbox"/>	CLOSED TIGHT <input type="checkbox"/>	CLOSED TIGHT <input type="checkbox"/>	OPENED AT _____ PSID	AIR INLET _____ PSID
FAILED <input type="checkbox"/>			#1 CHECK _____ PSID	CHK VALVE _____ PSID

AIR GAP INSPECTION: Required minimum air gap separation provided? Yes ☐ No ☐ **Detector Meter Reading**

REMARKS: _____

PRINCIPAL MASTER PLBR. WSSC LIC. # _____ LINE PRESSURE _____

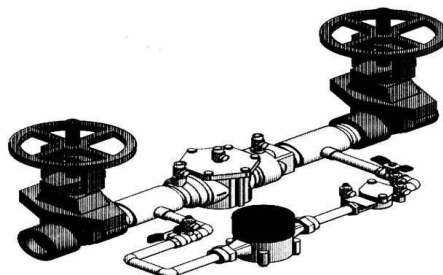
TESTER'S SIGNATURE _____ WSSC LIC. NO. _____ DATE _____

TESTER'S NAME PRINTED _____ TESTER'S PHONE # () _____

REPAIRED BY _____ WSSC LIC. NO. _____ DATE _____

FINAL TEST BY _____ WSSC LIC. NO. _____ DATE _____

GAUGE CALIBRATION DATE: ____/____/____ WATER SERVICE RESTORED: YES ☐ NO ☐



FOG Unit Tips for NOV's—Part 1



Wayne Ludwig
FOG
Unit Coordinator

The FOG (Fats Oils and Grease) Unit's job is to get every working, qualified food service establishment (FSE) in the WSSD fully inspected, usually on an annual basis. By working, we mean "open for business" and by qualified we mean they meet minimum standards for FOG production, of any quantity.

All routine inspections include noting any and all WSSC Plumbing Code violations, the majority being related to specific FOG-related items.

The most common violations are:

- Improper tail pieces from sinks / potential for overloading the flow rating of a Grease Abatement Device (GAD)*
- Garbage disposal to GAD
- One or more kitchen fixtures not connected to GAD inside or out (flow or volume based)
- Unfamiliarity with maintenance requirements/needs for a GAD.
- Older/outdated/obsolete kitchen devices or plumbing needing modernized.
- Applicable floor drains not con-

nected to interceptor

- Applicable floor mop sink not connected to GAD inside or out
- No interceptor / passive GAD for amount of wastewater that can potentially be discharged
- Wrong / unapproved device for grease removal

*GAD-Grease Abatement Device: categorized as flow or volume based by Section 1003 of WSSC Code.

Whenever an NOV is issued, besides clarifying the NOV verbally, the FSE representative is given a fact/procedure sheet for responding to their NOV.

The info sheet is divided into three sections:

1. READ YOUR NOTICE OF VIOLATION
2. SELECT A PLUMBER LICENSED WITH WSSC
3. INFORM WSSC WHICH PLUMBER YOU SELECTED

This article will cover section 2:

SELECT A PLUMBER LICENSED WITH WSSC

- WSSC recommends obtaining a price quote from at least three WSSC Registered Master Plumb-

ers to complete the repairs as noted on the NOV

- After you have selected a Plumber, provide them with a copy of your NOV, along with the paper titled "INSTRUCTIONS TO PLUMBER"

NOTE: WSSC Staff is not permitted to recommend nor provide a list of plumbers. If you would like to verify that your Plumber is licensed with WSSC and in good standing, please call 301-206-8588.

On random occasions even after being told that no recommendations for plumbers can be made, and being directed to re-read it in the written notice, an FSE owner will attempt to query the Investigator again (and again). The Investigator must stand firm. However, this does not prevent an FSE owner from pursuing only one plumber and saying "WSSC recommended him" regardless of the accuracy of the statement.

In 2014, over 40 plumbing firms had FOG NOV work that were submitted to the FOG Unit from over 675 NOV's issued.

In the next newsletter we will cover the general expectations of the Plumber performing work on FOG NOV's.

Trade Humor:



Q: Why shouldn't you play poker with a plumber?

A: Because a good flush beats a full house every time.

Contact Us:

Plan Review.....	301-206-8886
CC/Bkflow P.G. Co.....	301-206-8601
CC/Bkflow Mont. Co.....	301-206-7932
Licensing.....	301-206-8588
Schedule Inspection SF Permit.....	301-206-4004
Schedule Inspection LF Permit.....	301-206-8383
Anacostia Depot.....	301-206-4363
Gaithersburg/Seneca Depot.....	301-206-7365
Lyttonsville Depot.....	301-206-7340
Temple Hills Depot.....	301-206-7302
FOG.....	301-206-8575
Permits.....	301-206-4003
COI Fax.....	301-206-8884
COIs can also be emailed to:	
insurancecertificate@wsscwater.com	



Let us hear from you:

Is there something you would like to see in future issues of this newsletter? Email your suggestions or comments to:

Beverly.Houser@wsscwater.com

(please make note of my new email address)