



## **OPERATOR TRAINING COMMITTEE OF OHIO, INC** **-OHIO ENVIRONMENTAL TRAINING CENTER-**

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Date: Monday, April 20, 2020

To: All Students Registered or Future Registrants for the OTCO Backflow Prevention Course 36 Hour Course

From: Gary Espenschied – Backflow Coordinator, Operator Training Committee of Ohio, Inc.

Subject: Live Webinar Training Option for the Weeklong Backflow Prevention Course

Webinar Instructor: Gary Espenschied

Because of the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) OTCO has cancelled all classroom training for the Backflow Classes scheduled in April thru August of 2020.

As an alternative to the classroom portion of the training, OTCO is offering live Webinar training. The first Webinar will be **May 11, 2020 thru May 14, 2020**. This Webinar will consist of four (4) days of training.

The Webinar will be in session from **8:00am until 3:00pm**. There will be two (2) 15 minute breaks and a half hour (30 minute) lunch break take during this period.

Your final grade for the virtual training will be calculated as follows:

1. You must be online all four days (6 hours each day. 24 hours total).

***NOTE: Your log-in time will be monitored. Each student must log-in (computer, tablet, smartphone).***

2. Must take the written exam 1 (25% of your grade).
3. Must take the written exam 2 (25% of your grade).
4. Must take the written exam 3 (50% of your grade).

The minimum passing grade is an accumulative total of 70 points. You must score 70 or better in order to proceed with the Hand-on portion of the course which will be scheduled with you sometime between September 2020 and June 2021. The Hands-on portion of the course will consist of one (1) 8 hour day of hands-on practice of testing and one (1) 4 hour day of being tested on your ability to test and repair the assemblies: 12 Hours Total.

By completing the Webinar successfully (70% or higher score) **and** then passing the Hands-on portion, you will then be entitled to receive an OTCO Backflow Tester Certification. The certificate is good for 3 years and will expire on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the third year.

You will also be contact hours as follows:

Webinar = 24 OEPA Approved Contact Hours OTCO-B13437-OM

Hands-on = 12 OEPA Approved Contact Hours OTCO-B13438-OM

36 OEPA Approve Contact Hours

**REGISTRATION:** [CLICK HERE](#) to register for May 11-14, 2020 Backflow Prevention Course Webinar.

**Fee:** \$725.00 **NOTE:** If you have already registered for a Backflow classroom course by location and you wish to take Webinar Backflow Prevention Course, you **MUST** register.

If you have any questions please contact: Gary A. Espenschied \* OTCO Backflow Coordinator

Phone: (513) 284-9363 \* Email: [gary@otco.org](mailto:gary@otco.org)

**NOTE:** See Page #2: OEPA “Backflow Prevention Program During COVID-19”.

**OHIO EPA'S COVID-19**  
**RESPONSE, QUESTIONS & GUIDANCE FOR THE**  
**BACKFLOW PREVENTION PROGRAM**  
**AS OF 4/8/2020**

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**BACKFLOW PREVENTION PROGRAM DURING COVID-19**

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The PWS should continue to make every effort to comply with Ohio EPA regulations (Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) 3745-95), and any subsequent backflow prevention program related ordinances, standards or operating procedures. PWSs that are unable to comply with a requirement of the rules should:

- Notify their district representative of the situation or rule variation
- Submit a request for regulatory flexibility through Ohio EPA's Regulatory Flexibility form that can be found at <https://epa.ohio.gov/covid19>. Information to include in the request:
  - State the specific regulatory or permit requirement which cannot be complied with
  - Provide a concise statement describing the circumstances preventing compliance
  - State the anticipated duration of time that the noncompliance will persist
  - State the mitigative measures that will be taken to protect public health and the environment during the need for enforcement discretion
  - A central point of contact for the PWS, including an email address and phone number
- The PWS should continue to administer their backflow prevention program by properly prioritizing degrees of hazard and situation specific levels of risk, evaluating service connection status, and documenting connections that become inactive.
- In the event a backflow preventer is not accessible for scheduled testing/inspection due to facility specific access restrictions, temporary closure, or other reasons relatable to COVID-19, documentation of the reason for not completing required tests/inspections should be provided by the customer and maintained by the supplier of water. The PWS must document what will be done to resolve the issue and follow through with the customer to ensure the test/inspection is completed as soon as it becomes possible.
- Service connections may be denied water service, or may continue to be denied water service, by the supplier of water in accordance with OAC 3745-95-08 in order to protect public health. Water service reconnection requirements and disconnection restrictions relative to HB 197 pertain to situations of customer non-payment only.
- If water service is being restored to a customer in accordance with HB 197/March 31, 2020, Director's Emergency Orders, and the service is for a business or residence with an auxiliary water source(s), any backflow and potential contamination issues must be mitigated, and backflow prevention devices must be tested and found to be in working order prior to reconnection in accordance with OAC 3745-95.
- Many personnel accepted to test/inspect backflow preventers are considered "essential" service providers during the COVID-19 health crisis. If personnel availability is a concern, the PWS should work with the service provider to inquire about their "essential" designation status. The system should encourage their service providers to sign up for membership in the Ohio Public Private Partnership (OP3) at <https://homelandsecurity.ohio.gov/op3.stm>. Once they are a member they will be able to receive instructions on how to receive essential employee credentials.