

**Rule No. 16 – Service Connections, Meters, and Customer’s Facilities**

(N)

**A. General**

**1. Utility’s Responsibility**

- a. In urban areas with dedicated front streets, rear service roads, or public utility easements the utility will furnish and install the service pipe, curb stop, meter, and meter box at its own expense for the purpose of connecting its distribution system to the customer’s piping, except for temporary services and as otherwise provided in Rule 15, Main Extensions. The service connection, curb stop, meter, and meter box will be installed at a convenient place between the property line and the curb, or inside the customer’s property line where necessary.

In areas which do not have dedicated front streets, rear service roads, or public utility easements, the utility will furnish and install the service pipe, curb stop, meter, and meter box as above provided but at a convenient point on or near the customer’s property except for service beyond the service area.

- b. The service connection will determine the point of delivery of water service to the customer.

**2. Customer’s Responsibility**

**a. Condition Precedent to Receiving Service**

The customer as a condition precedent to receiving service shall:

- (1) Furnish and lay the necessary piping to make the connection from the service connection to the place of consumption and shall keep such piping in good repair in accordance with such reasonable requirements of the utility as may be incorporated in its rules herein.
- (2) Provide a main valve on the piping between the service connection and the point of customer use.
- (3) Where service is rendered at or near the service area boundary for use beyond the service area, install, operate, and maintain the facilities necessary to provide service.

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(continued)

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**Rule No. 16 – Service Connections, Meters, and Customer’s Facilities (continued)**

(N)

- b. The customer’s piping shall extend to that point on the curb line or property line of easiest access to the utility from its existing distribution system or requiring the least extension of the existing distribution main. The utility shall be consulted before installation thereof and its approval of location secured.

**3. Ownership and Absence of Rental Obligation Where Facilities Are on Premises of Customer.**

- a. The service pipe, curb stop, meter, and meter box furnished by or on behalf of the utility at its own expense and located wholly or partially upon a customer’s premises are the property of the utility.
- b. No rent or other charge will be paid by the utility where the utility-owned service facilities are located on a customer’s premises.

**4. Access to Premises of Customer**

- a. The utility shall at all reasonable hours have access to meters, service connections, and other property owned by it which may be located on customer’s premises for purposes of installation, maintenance, operation, or removal of the property at the time service is to be terminated. The customer’s system should be open for inspection at all reasonable times to authorized representatives of the utility.
- b. Any inspection work or recommendations made by the utility or its agents in connection with plumbing or appliances or any use of water on the customer’s premises, either as a result of a complaint or otherwise, will be made without charge.

**5. Responsibility for Loss or Damage**

- a. The utility will not be responsible for any loss or damage caused by any negligence or wrongful act of a customer or of a customer’s authorized representatives in installing, maintaining, operating, or using any or all appliances, facilities, or equipment for which service is supplied.
- b. The customer will be held responsible for damage to utility’s meters and other property resulting from the use or operation of appliances and facilities on customer’s premises, including, but not limited to damage caused by steam, hot water, or chemicals.

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(continued)

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**B. Services**

**1. Charge for Service Connections**

Except as provided in subparagraphs a., b., or c. below, the utility shall make no charge to a customer for making a service connection except in case of connections for private fire protection service, connections for temporary service, changes made at the request, and for the convenience of the customer, where additional connections are requested because of divisions of land ownership when the land before division was receiving service, and as otherwise provided in the utility’s main extension rules.

**a. Individual Customer Connection Fee**

A Class C or Class D utility, or a Class A or Class B utility district or subsidiary serving 2,000 or fewer connections, may accept from individual customers amounts in contribution as a connection fee calculated pursuant to the Commission’s Connection Fee Data Form contained in the utility’s tariffs.

**b.** In lieu of paying the connection fee, an applicant for a service connection may retain a licensed contractor, qualified in the judgment of the utility, to install the service connection. Cost to the utility of inspection and supervision of the installation, including gross-up for tax required by a contribution, shall be paid by the applicant. The applicant shall provide the utility with a statement of actual construction cost in reasonable detail. The amount shall be treated as contribution by the utility. The installation shall be in accordance with plans and specifications of the utility.

**c. Individual Customer Facilities Fee**

A Class C or Class D utility, or a Class A or Class B utility district or subsidiary serving 2,000 or fewer connections, may accept from individual customers amounts in contribution as a facilities fee calculated pursuant to tariff approved by the Commission.

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(continued)

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**2. Size of Service Pipe**

- a. The minimum size of service pipe installed by the utility will not be less than ¾-inch nominal size.
- b. The utility may require the customer to provide such data as may be necessary for the utility to properly size a service larger than ¾-inch nominal size consistent with pressure requirements.

**3. Installation**

Only duly authorized employees or agents of the utility (or contractors, upon approval of the utility) will be permitted to install a service pipe from the utility’s main to the location of the service connection. The connection from the meter to the customer’s piping will be made by the utility; provided, however, that if the customer’s piping requires repair or replacement, the connection may, at the option of the utility, be made by the customer or his agent.

**C. Cross Connections**

**1. Protective Regulation**

No physical connection between the potable water supply system of the public utility and that of any other water supply or source of actual or potential contamination will be permitted except in compliance with the regulations of the State Department of Public Health contained in Title 17, Sections 7583-7605 of the California Code of Regulations under “Regulations Relating to Cross-Connections.”

**2. Backflow Preventers Required**

The utility will evaluate the degree of potential health hazard to the public water supply which may be created as a result of conditions existing on a user’s premises. As a minimum, the evaluation will consider: the existence of cross-connections, the nature of materials handled on the property, the probability of a backflow occurring, the degree of piping system complexity, and the potential for piping system modification.

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(continued)

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The utility will require the installation of approved backflow preventers of required type under any of the following conditions:

- a. Where a fresh water supply which has not been approved by the State Department of Health Services already available from a well, spring, reservoir or other source. If the customer agrees to abandon this other supply and agrees to remove all pumps and piping necessary for the utilization of this supply, the installation of backflow preventers will not be required.
- b. Where salt water, or water otherwise contaminated, is available for industrial or fire protection purposes at the same premises.
- c. Where the premises are or may be engaged in industrial processes using or producing process waters or liquid industrial wastes, or where the premises are or may be engaged in handling sewage or any other dangerous substances.
- d. Where fresh water hydrants or other outlets are or may be installed on piers or docks.
- e. Where the circumstances are such that there is special danger of backflow of sewage or other contaminated liquids through plumbing fixtures or water-using or treating equipment, or storage tanks and reservoirs.
- f. Premises that have internal cross-connections that are not abated to the satisfaction of the utility or health agency.
- g. Premises where cross-connections are likely to occur and entry is restricted so that cross-connection inspections cannot be made with sufficient frequency or at sufficiently short notice to assure that cross-connections do not exist.
- h. Premises having a repeated history of cross-connections being established or re-established.

**3. Type and Expense of Backflow Preventers**

Any backflow preventer utilized shall be of the type and design specified and approved for the circumstances in Section 7604, Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations, except that a customer may utilize an approval backflow preventer providing greater protection than required by Section 7604. Such backflow preventers shall be installed by and at the expense of the customer, in a manner approved by the utility and the public health agency having jurisdiction. Backflow preventers shall be installed as close as practical to the customer’s connection to the utility and in a location which is readily available for periodic inspection.

Backflow preventers shall be tested, repaired, or replaced at the expense of the customer.

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**4. Periodic Testing of Backflow Preventers**

Whenever a backflow preventer is installed, relocated, or repaired, the customer shall have it tested by persons who have demonstrated their competency in testing of these preventers to the utility or health agency. Backflow preventers shall be tested at least annually or more frequently if determined to be necessary by the health agency or utility. The utility shall notify the customer when testing of backflow preventers is needed. The notice shall give the date when the test must be completed. Reports of testing and maintenance shall be maintained by the utility for a minimum of three years.

**5. Refusal to Serve or Discontinuance of Service**

The utility may refuse or discontinue service:

- a. Until there has been installed on the customer’s piping an approved backflow preventer of the required type, if one is required.
- b. Where the utility has been denied access to the customer’s premises to make an evaluation.
- c. Where the customer refuses to test a backflow preventer, or to repair or replace a faulty backflow preventer.
- d. Where there is a direct or indirect connection between the public water system and a sewer line.
- e. Where there is an unprotected direct or indirect connection between the public water system and a system or equipment containing contaminants.
- f. Where there is an unprotected direct or indirect connection between the public water system and auxiliary water system.
- g. Where there is a situation which presents an immediate health hazard to the public water system.

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**6. Pumps and Boosters**

When a customer receiving service at the utility’s main or service connection must, by means of a pump of any kind, increase the pressure of the water received, the pump shall not be attached to any pipe directly connected to the utility’s main or service pipe. Such pumping or boosting of pressure shall be done, at the option of the utility, either:

- a. From a sump, cistern, or storage tank which must be served through an air gap connection, or
- b. From a combination of an approved backflow preventer plus a device approved by the water utility to prevent the booster pump from drawing the utility’s system pressure below 20 p.s.i.g.

This requirement shall not apply to American Water Works Association (AWWA) Class 2 Fire Protection Systems, except as provided for in the Information Bulletin issued by the Office of State Fire Marshal on December 10, 1984.

AWWA Class 2 Fire Protection Systems have direct connections from public water mains only; no pumps, tanks, or reservoirs, except that booster pumps may be installed in the connections from the street mains to the fire protection systems; no physical connection from other water supplies; no antifreeze or other additives of any kind; all sprinkler drains discharging to atmosphere, dry wells, or other safe outlets.

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