



Backflow Group
WATER NEW ZEALAND

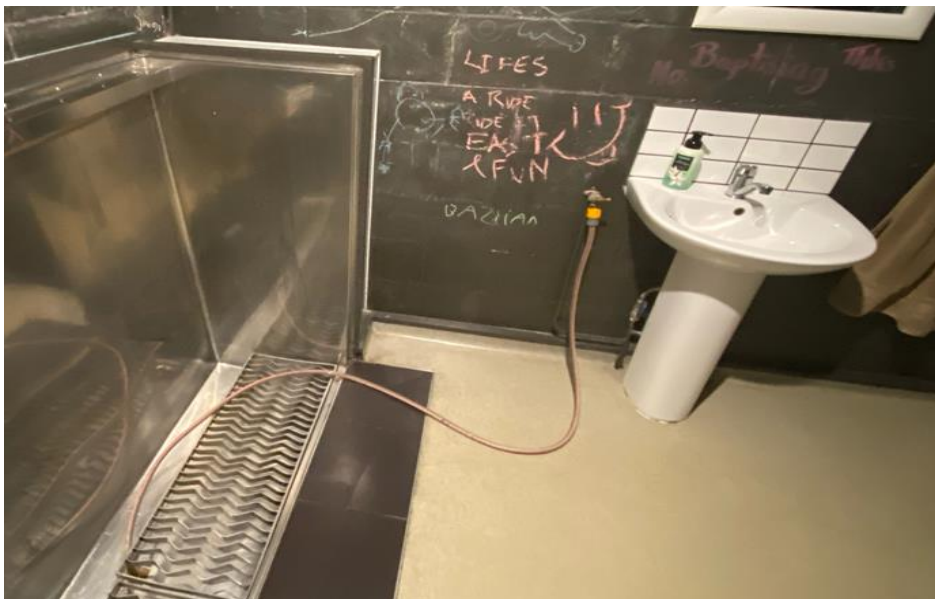
Backflow Group Newsletter

The Water New Zealand Backflow Group quarterly e-Newsletter

Kia Ora! It's been another busy time with Webinars, Submissions and, in the case of the author, a dose of near fatal man flu. The Committee has decided to move meetings to a monthly schedule to tackle the sheer volume of work ahead of us. The main focus of the Committee for the next few months will be planning for the 2023 Conference which will hopefully be at a time when NZ has defeated the dreaded Covid or at least has it pinned to the canvas and begging for mercy. In the meantime, stay safe and watch this space for updates.

Watering Down The Beer

When Committee member Richard Aitken popped into a South Island pub, he suspected the beer tasted funny but had no idea why. A trip to the toilets soon revealed that the pub had not understood some of the basics of backflow prevention and a hose tap without any form of protection was now feeding the urinals.



WHAT'S NEW

WATERING DOWN THE BEER

WORLD BACKFLOW DAY

COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT-ERICA HOBBS

GROUP WORKPLAN UPDATE

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

AUSTRALIAN BACKFLOW CONFERENCE

WORLD BACKFLOW DAY

World Backflow Day is observed on August 16 every year. The purpose of this is to recognise and honour backflow preventers and the professionals who ensure our potable water supply is free of toxins, waste, harmful chemicals, and other contaminants. The holiday also aims to spread awareness about the importance of backflow prevention and how the technology is used. The day was first observed on August 16, 2021, to commemorate the tragic backflow incident on the same day in 1933 at the Chicago World Fair. During this event, thousands of people visited the city with many staying in two popular hotels that shared a rooftop water source. This cross-connection, unfortunately, led to dysentery contamination in the water supply of the hotels. This led to over 2,000 individuals falling ill and about 98 fatally succumbing to the effects.

The Water New Zealand Backflow Group will be working with our Australian counterparts to produce several short videos for social media and run some competitions to find the best backflow device photo. This can be anything from a device that is picturesquely located, brilliantly posed for by testers or even celebrity endorsed.

As usual, any photos of backflow matters (both good and bad) can be emailed to Jim at jim.mcgibbon@water.co.nz or Katrina at Katrina.guy@waternz.org.nz.



COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHT- ERICA HOBBS

Erica was born in Rotorua, raised in Wellington and is currently based in Marlborough.

Erica's move into the water industry wasn't a planned one because she was originally looking at doing biology of some kind at university, however based on her interest in tech drawing, mathematics, physics and playing in mud and water, she ended up studying for an NZCE Civil and discovered that she loved most of it, especially the earth science and water aspects. During her engineering studies she could usually be found hanging out in the Fluids Lab, or on occasion, sneaking into some of the NZCE Mech lectures because she found them immensely interesting too.



Since starting work Erica has been involved in many aspects of the industry, including site investigation, survey, design, construction drawings, construction supervision and project management for sewer, water, stormwater and roading projects, as well as hydraulic modelling and design of water networks, network operations management and a touch of water treatment. That's a killer CV right there.

Erica is now working for local government in Marlborough but has worked for local government and private consultants in Wellington, Waihi, Hawkes Bay, Auckland, Taranaki, Brisbane, the Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast! She is currently involved in the O&M of a partially treated rural water supply that is under a long term boil water notice. Erica has lived and worked in several rural areas, so has first-hand personal and professional experience of the water quality and health issues that arise from backflow events in rural water supplies.

Erica says "being passionate about backflow and water quality is being passionate about drinking water protection - safe drinking water is one of the greatest contributions to public health. I love looking after our community by making sure they have drinking water and that it is as safe as possible". She is regularly told by customers that her passion for the job is very clear in her interactions with them, and that they appreciate the work she does both for and with them. This gives her great satisfaction of a job well done.

Erica is the most recent addition to the Water New Zealand Backflow Committee and is excited to be representing the industry at a national level. She looks forward to being involved in developing and advising the best industry practices and advocating and promoting on behalf of the industry. She believes the current reforms offer an exciting opportunity to improve the delivery and protection of safe drinking water and is excited to see an industry that is providing well protected safe drinking water consistently across the country.

When not working, Erica enjoys kayaking, orienteering, cycling (mostly off-road) and can usually be found in her workshop designing and creating just about anything. She has also been involved in musical theatre for many years, doing almost everything behind the stage including set building, stage crew, lighting, sound, stage management, production management, and executive committee as a committee member and as vice-president.

When the Backflow Committee decides on an end of year Pantomime, we know where to come for the behind the scenes grafting. Now all we need is a nomination for Widow Twankey...



Group Workplan Update

1. WS-014 / WS-023

Face to face meetings will hopefully commence soon which will mean these meetings will be easier to push along. Richard will seek group input for projects that the standards committee are involved in.

2. G12 Update

The group sat with Ross Wakefield of MBIE and pulled together a draft submission for the changes to G12. The Committee thanks Ross for his time and effort in helping make this happen and another big thanks to Noel Roberts and Lesley Smith for pulling this submission together.

3. Backflow Training

Backflow 101 is now live and the group is looking at improvements for Backflow 201 and beyond. IQP training remains a grey area and the standards for this need to be firmed up.

4. Code of Practice

Brian Brown is heading up a working group to re-work this to make it truly fit for purpose. It should serve as a backbone for any national policy.

5. Survey Unit Standards

Rob and Kevin are working on a survey training framework. Rural areas remain a huge gap.

6. Backflow Rules

The Rules laid down by Taumata Arowai have been published and a Webinar on these will take place after October. These Rules will underpin everything that the new Bill is trying to accomplish with regard to backflow prevention so we must make sure they are fair, effective and robust.

7. National Backflow IQP Register

This was raised at the Webinar and will be discussed with Water New Zealand and Taumata Arowai. Training of IQPs will be a key facet of this work.

8. 2023 Conference Planning

This is already underway and a sub-committee has been established to drive it.

9. General Business

Stephen Campbell has resigned from the Committee. The Committee wishes him well and thanks him for his time and service to the backflow cause.

Update from the Chair

Paul van den Berg (Chair)

Kia ora and Hello Everyone,

Half-way through the year already and it's not slowing down. The Backflow Group have had two meetings since the last issue of Flowback. Lots of comments from the group about how good it is to be able to meet and discuss matters face to face and turn off the screen for a while.

The Backflow Group also held a meeting later in June, specifically to confirm and finalize feedback for a submission on the Building Code - MBIE. This included comments on some of the backflow content - clarification and improvements on some technical matters - standards. Noel Roberts included these items with the submission from Water New Zealand.

Some of the Backflow Group members attended part 2 of the 2021 Water New Zealand Conference & Expo on May 25- 26 in Hamilton. I was approached by a number of delegates and suppliers with a lot of interest in backflow and the new rules from Taumata Arowai. By all accounts, it was a very successful conference.

The Conference organizing team are busy looking at suitable venues and accommodation options and the structure of the conference itself. We are hoping to confirm some of the arrangements in the next few months.

If you have any discussions or articles, you would like included, please let us know. You can email Jim at jim.mcgibbon@water.co.nz or Katrina at Katrina.guy@waternz.org.nz with any submissions, questions or comments.

Nga mihi, Noho ora mai, | Kind regards

Paul van den Berg



Australian Backflow Conference



Backflow Prevention
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

THE 2022 BACKFLOW PREVENTION CONFERENCE

Tuesday 16th & Wednesday 17th August 2022

PROTECTING OUR WATER SUPPLY



Image courtesy of VisitCanberra

www.waternz.org.nz