

Letter 1

From: O'brien,Leslie F,II
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2009 9:59 AM
To: Steve Peraza
Subject: Administering a CCC program

We still have a few tester/contractors who are charging the customers outrageous prices for annual field tests and repairs.

Here is an example sent to me by a customer for a ¾ inch RP.

\$ 120.00 test
\$ 90.00 2 service calls
\$ 77.00 parts
\$ 512.50 labor
\$ 41.25 tax

\$ 840.85 total

The average annual field test in Florida is around \$60.00. Smaller companies may charge less while large companies may charge more because of overhead. The rubber kit for a ¾" assembly is between \$25.00 and \$40.00.

Here are some signs to watch for:

1. Customer complaints about high prices charged for annual field test.
2. Tester repairs the same assembly every year.
3. Tester replaces the assemblies rather than repair them.

Remember when you place a tester or company on your Approved Tester List you are in effect entering into an unwritten contract with that tester or company. You are responsible for the quality of the work performed by the tester. You are telling your customers that the water utility fully trusts the tester and will stand behind their work.

How do you know the tester is qualified to test the assemblies? The certificate they receive may not be an indication of competency. The certificate may only signify that the student passed the minimum requirements for that training facility. Some training facilities do not actually require the students to know how to perform the hands-on field tests.

If the tester continues to perform poorly and you do not remove them from the Approved Tester List the perception by the customer might be that someone at the utility company is benefitting from this tester being on the list.

Some suggestions:

1. Evaluate the tester before you place them on the list.
2. Have the tester sign a Code of Conduct document. Examples:
<http://www.nobackflow.com/Code-Conduct.htm>
3. Rotate your list so that every good tester gets a turn at the top of the list.

I hope this information will help you administering your Cross-Connection Control Program. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Thank you

Les

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Letter 2

From: O'brien,Leslie F,II
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2009 3:04 PM
To: Macmillan,Mari L
Subject: RE: Update and proposed changes

Mari,

True, but subtly I am hoping that better training will discourage **the criminals**.

The testers who have taken the repair class and/or the advanced class may very well welcome this proposal.

The testers who are just maintaining their certificate and don't really do any field testing could care less. They are not competing with other testers or contractors. This is about 60 % of our recent testers.

The rip-off artist will not spend more money on training. **They are trying to milk the system** at the lowest possible cost to themselves.

By raising the bar, the unethical will be slowly weeded out of the system. That is if the water purveyors actually will do their jobs.

If the DEP rule passes, every community water system will be required to provide extensive data about their CCC program. If the DEP rule fails to pass then we may be just spinning our wheels.

Hopefully we will know more next month.

Les

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Letter 3

From: O'brien,Leslie F,II
Sent: Thursday, June 11, 2009 11:39 AM
To: Gale, Harold T.
Cc: Macmillan,Mari L; Hinton,Carol
Subject: RE: Update and proposed changes

Harry,

You have made some good points. We will ponder these. Thank you.

One of my major concerns is the reputation of the UF and TREEO.

Too many testers are ripping off the customers and charging criminal prices.

We are trying to find a way to give a tool to the water purveyors so they can control the crimes.

I did not plan to ask the testers for their approval. I am asking the water purveyors if they want TREEO to initiate a better system. If the water purveyors are not interested then we will not spend the extra time and money on this project.

BTW - Only 1 or 2% of our testers could pass the ABPA or USC examinations. What does that say about the quality of our students? The western states seem to have better qualified testers that the east coast.

I understand that the poor quality testers will go someplace cheaper and easier. We really don't want those individuals representing UF-TREEO. I don't need a customer to declare that "a TREEO trained tester ripped me off."

Also the testers who make an effort to be better trained should be rewarded for their efforts. We are still a society where the people who work harder and are better trained should get ahead.

Testers in Charleston, SC who had also passed our repair class filed a lawsuit against Charleston because the utility did not recognize their achievements and advanced training. I guess it can go either way.

Please give me some ideas how we can instill honesty and proper ethics into our students. I will forward your e-mail to my boss and wait to discuss with her.

Thank you again.

Have a great summer.

Les

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