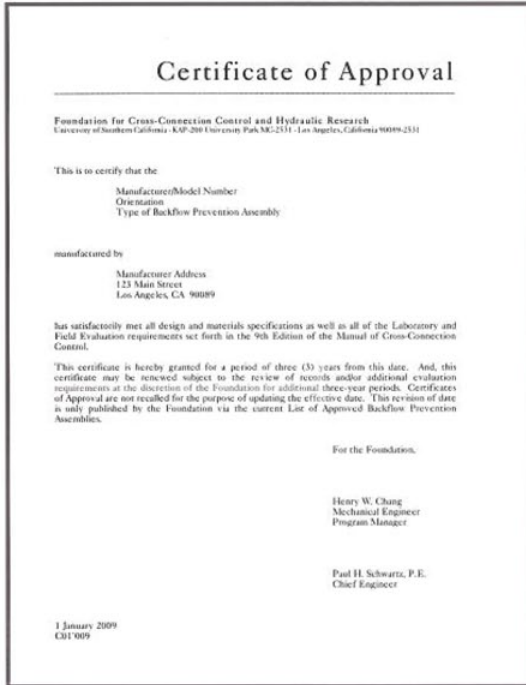


Certificate of Approval

The Foundation's approval process consists of a laboratory and field evaluation. After successfully completing the process, the backflow prevention assembly is added to the List of Approved Backflow Prevention Assemblies and the manufacturer is issued a certificate of approval from the Foundation. That certificate of approval has created some confusion among administrative authorities and customers.

The certificate of approval is issued on the date the assembly is added on the List. Following the initial approval all assemblies on the List are subject to renewal every three years. And, if granted, the renewal date appears on the List in the column titled renewed. However, the Foundation does not print out new certificates of approval each time an existing assembly is renewed.



It has come to the attention of the Foundation that some may use the certificate of approval date to mislead customers into believing that a more recent approval means a superior assembly. Unfortunately, a number of people have used the certificate of approval as a marketing ploy by referring to their competitor's product as having an "old" approval.

For example, since the certificate is only printed once, a manufacturer that had an assembly approved back in May 1997 has a certificate with that date. But, that assembly may have gone through many successful renewals and continues to appear on the List as an approved assembly. Yet, the manufacturer only has a certificate stating the May 1997 date. Therefore, to the misinformed it might seem at first glance that the approval is "old."

Administrative authorities that are not Foundation members or do not have access to the List may be misled to believe that an older date on a certificate of approval means that the product is in some way not as capable as a more recently approved assembly. This conclusion is absolutely false. As long as the assembly continues to appear on the List it is approved.

Since the Foundation does not print renewal certificates, a manufacturer may only have a certificate from its initial approval 10, 15 or 20 years ago. But, that does not mean the assembly is inferior to an assembly that was approved a month ago. However, it may be that an assembly that was originally approved some years ago was approved under the Eighth Edition of the Manual or even an earlier edition. In this case, it is important to note that the standard under which the assembly was approved is different than the current standard. Although an assembly approved under an earlier edition of the manual is still approved, it was approved under a previous standard. So, it may or may not meet the standard published in the current edition of the manual.

If you have any questions concerning the approval of an assembly the Foundation office is available via e-mail (fccchr@usc.edu) or phone (866-545-6340). ■