Top 10 List
Pandemic & Natural Disasters Notebook

Updating Emergency Response Plans (ERP) for Drinking Water & Wastewater Systems

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THE MOST IMPORTANT STEP IS TO UPDATE YOUR EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

During a natural disaster or pandemic emergency, it should be assumed that water systems could have severe shortages in staffing and disruptions in the supply chain. There is also potential for disruption of communications, transportation, services, utilities and public safety.

Refer to these tips and make notes to update your Emergency Response Plan.

Top 10

Review Your ERP

10

Review and update your emergency response plan, including identification of critical functions and supplies, that will need coverage. Plan for operating with severe staff shortages (40-60%).

Prepare Yourself

9

Prepare yourself, your family and your home first (see "Are You Ready?" guide and CDC guide: www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic/healthtips.htm). Have policies in place that allow workers to take care of families, but still provide adequate staffing.

Examine Workforce Alternatives

8

Examine workforce alternatives: mutual aid agreements with area communities, contingency plans with contract operators, and cross training within town departments and utilities. Evaluate and test safe and secure use of automation. (e.g., SCADA)

Collect Utility Information

7

Create and maintain both an on-site and off-site emergency kit. Compile emergency contacts, updated utility diagrams/maps of the system, O&M manuals, standard operating procedures, and critical customer information. Also, maintain extra sets of facility keys at multiple secure locations.

Conduct a "Walk Through"

6

Conduct a "walk through" tour of your facility with your local emergency responders and alternate operators to familiarize them. Make sure all valves and equipment are clearly and accurately labeled.

Have a Communications Strategy

5

Have a communications strategy. Include ways to communicate emergency updates with the state and customers. Develop standard language for various public notices, including: Do Not Drink, Boil Water Notices, etc.

Stock Supplies

4

Stock supplies and chemicals safely and securely. If space is an issue, have backup vendor contact information up-to-date and available. Ensure that all applicable regulations are complied with when storing chemicals on-site.

Exercise Generators

3

Exercise emergency generators under load. Also, have plans in place for receiving fuel in an emergency.

Employee Preparations

2

Consider preparations for employees remaining at work for extended periods. This could include adequate sleeping arrangements, food, water, medical supplies, communication links, etc.

Practice

1

Practice, practice, practice your
Emergency Response Plan!
...and wash your hands!

Other Links:

www.epa.gov/naturalevents/

www.epa.gov/safewater/watersecurity/

www.cdc.gov/flu/pandemic/

www.pandemicflu.gov

www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/

www.fema.gov/

www.redcross.org/services/disaster/

www.waterisac.org

www.watersc.org

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Top10 List • At-a-Glance

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7. Collect Utility Information
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5. Have a Communications Strategy
4. Stock Supplies
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2. Employee Preparations
1. Practice

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Drinking
Water
Security

www.epa.gov/ne/eco/drinkwater/