

Easy Ways to Make Your Utility Better Prepared for Emergencies

1. **Instruct** all your personnel to become certified in IS-100.PWb, Introduction to the Incident Command System for Public Works Personnel and IS-700.a, National Incident Management System (NIMS), An Introduction at <http://training.fema.gov/IS/NIMS.asp>. FREE
2. **Review** your Emergency Response Plan (ERP) with your local emergency management coordinator - be sure to talk about the location of your critical infrastructure, the timing and routes of your chemical deliveries, and your alternate drinking water plans. FREE
3. **Conduct or host** a multiagency tabletop exercise at your utility with local first responders - get to know them before a disaster strikes! http://yosemite.epa.gov/ow/SReg.nsf/description/TTX_Tool LOW COST
4. **Join** the Pennsylvania Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network (PaWARN) at <http://www.pawarn.org>. LOW COST
5. **Subscribe** to an emergency notification/reverse 911 system. LOW COST
6. **Determine** your minimum generator requirements for an extended power outage and hardwire your junction boxes to receive generators - use the emergency generator form at <http://www.epa.gov/reg3wapd/drinking/security.htm>. LOW COST
7. **Join** an alert or early warning monitoring network in your area. FREE
8. **Sign up** for AlertPA at <http://alert.pa.gov>. AlertPA is an application managed by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that is used to send emergency alerts, notifications and updates to cell phones, pagers, BlackBerries, PDA's and/or e-mail accounts. FREE
9. **Determine** what resources are available through your county emergency management agency (e.g., water buffalos, generators) and include a resource request checklist in your Emergency Response Plan. FREE
10. **Include** "contacting 911" as a step in your water contamination investigation checklist. FREE
11. **Sign up** for the Government Emergency Telecommunications and Wireless Priority Services at <http://gets.ncs.gov/> and <http://wps.ncs.gov/>. LOW COST
12. **Subscribe** to the U.S. Geological Survey's free Water Alert service to automatically receive daily or hourly updates about current conditions in select source waters at <http://water.usgs.gov/wateralert/>. FREE
13. **Get** your utility added to your 911 dispatch center's call down list. FREE
14. **Develop** a schedule for the submission of updated contact information to your local emergency management coordinator - do it with the annual update of your Emergency Response Plan. FREE
15. **Consider** placing watershed signage along major routes of travel to alert public safety first responders of source water locations. LOW COST
16. **Purchase** a public safety radio scanner to serve as an early warning system for incidents and traffic accidents that may affect your utility's operations. LOW COST
17. **Type** your utility's resources according to AWWA's Water and Wastewater Mutual Aid and Assistance Resource Typing Manual. FREE
18. **Subscribe** to the PA One Call system at <http://www.pa1call.org/PA811/Public/>. LOW COST
19. **Join** the Water Information Sharing and Analysis Center (WaterISAC) at <http://www.waterisac.org>. LOW COST
20. **Determine** if your jurisdiction has a first responder credentialing program and get credentialed - just ask your local emergency management coordinator. FREE
21. **Prepare** water use advisory templates and critical customer and downstream water user contact lists. FREE.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection sponsored a county-level tabletop exercise series designed to bring together water and wastewater utilities with local first responders. At the exercises, participants discussed their actions, roles, and responsibilities during a hazardous material spill. Based on these exercises, the following is a list of fast, easy, and free or inexpensive steps you can take to increase emergency preparedness at your utility.

Water Sector Initial Incident Response

- Investigate and verify** any alarms, sensors, and/or customer complaints
- Conduct** a size-up or site characterization
- Take** corrective or protective action(s)
- Notify** supervisor(s) of the incident
- Establish or join** incident command
- Establish** incident objectives that address:
 - Life safety
 - Incident stabilization
 - Preservation of property and the environment
- Document** actions using agency forms or ICS Form 214 (Unit Log)
- Call** 911/local dispatch regarding recent accidents or incidents that may have an impact on your utility
- Call** 911 if you suspect vandalism or tampering
- Call** neighboring water and wastewater utilities to see if they are experiencing similar issues
- Call** wastewater pretreatment customers
- Notify** DEP, local government, critical customers, emergency management, response partners, and downstream users
- Determine** the need for additional resources such as personnel, equipment, and materials
- Prepare** advisories and public notifications
- Determine** the methods of public notification
- Prepare** to address the media
- Confer** with local health officials
- Confer** with public safety officials regarding water pressure and quality
- Update or establish** utility website to address public concerns
- Conduct** an after action review and update plans and procedures

Contacts:

Police: _____

Fire: _____

EMA: _____

Health: _____

DEP District: _____

DEP Region: _____

Electric Utility: _____

Lab: _____

Other Resources:

Your County Emergency Management Agency
http://www.pema.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/county_ema_9-1-1_coordinators/4629

Pennsylvania WARN
<http://www.pawarn.org>

Pennsylvania Rural Water Association
<http://www.prwa.com/>

Rural Community Assistance Partnership
<http://www.rcapsolutions.org/>

DEP Emergency Response Contact Numbers
http://www.depweb.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/report_an_incident/6010

Wireless Information System for Emergency Responders (WISER)
<http://wiser.nlm.nih.gov/>

CHEMTREC
<http://www.chemtrec.com/>

Incident Command System (ICS) Forms
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/ICSResource/index.htm>