

# **Emergency Response Planning Template for Public Drinking Water Systems**





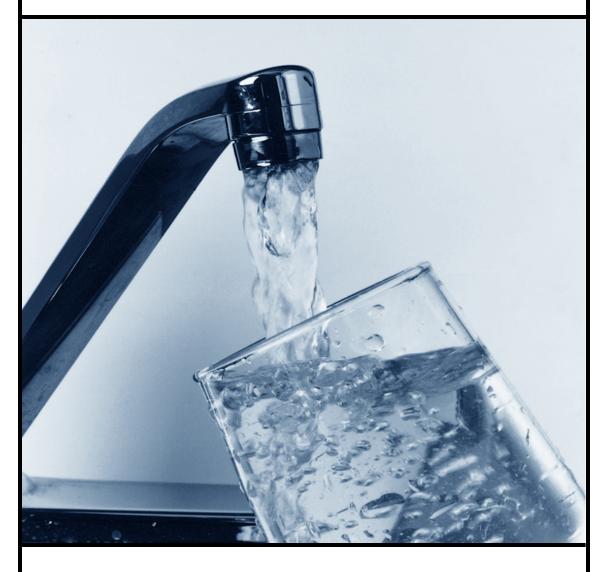






Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project, Inc.





Produced for the Rural Community Assistance Partnership (RCAP) National Network

by Rural Community Assistance Corporation, Western RCAP

RCAP Safety and Security Education Program

# **Emergency Response Planning Template for Public Drinking Water Systems**

#### **RCAP Regional Offices:**

If you need technical assistance to complete your Emergency Response Plan, please contact one of our regional offices listed below.



Regional Offices	Contact Number	Web Address
RCAP National Office	888/321-7227	www.rcap.org
Western RCAP	916/447-2854	www.rcac.org
Southeast RCAP	866/928-3731	www.southeastrcap.org
Great Lakes RCAP	800/775-9767	www.glrcap.org
Southern RCAP	479/443-2700	www.crg.org
Northeast RCAP	800/488-1969	www.rcapsolutions.org
Midwest RCAP	952/758-4334	www.map-inc.org

This material is based upon work supported in part under a grant by the Rural Utilities Service, United States Department of Agriculture. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Rural Utilities Service. Additional funding provided by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and revised by RCAC (August 2005) based on materials developed by the Washington State Department of Health, Training and Outreach Section, Division of Drinking Water.

For additional copies of this publication, call 888/321-7227 or visit RCAP's web site at www.rcap.org.

This publication is being distributed under the auspices of Rural Community Assistance Partnership.





### **Contents**

Planning Template	2
Introduction	2
How to use the template	2
The requirement for an emergency response plan	Error! Bookmark not defined
Section 1. System Information	3
Section 2. Chain of Command – Lines of Authority	
Section 3. Events that Cause Emergencies	<u>5</u>
Section 4. Emergency Notification	
Section 5. Effective Communication	10
Section 6. Response Actions for Specific Events	11
Section 7. Alternative Water Sources	
Section 8. Returning to Normal Operation	18
Section 9. Plan Approval	19

### **Planning Template**



#### Introduction

Preparing an emergency response plan is an essential part of managing a drinking water system. Rural Community Assistance Partnership, Inc has developed this template for public water systems serving 3,300 population or fewer to help them develop such plans.



#### How to use the template

Developing an emergency response plan can take a lot of time and effort. The purpose of this document is to make the job easier and help create a plan that works for your water system. The document is intended for use by any water system and may be modified to fit the specific needs of each system. This document can be used as a starting point based on what is relevant for the type, size, and complexity of the system.

The template is just a guide; you may modify it in any way that works for your system – add sections, take them out, or rearrange them if you wish. You may also use a completely different format for your plan if you find one that works better for your system.

Since this document may contain sensitive information, make sure to keep it stored in a safe and secure location. It is recommended you have one copy stored on-site and one off-site to ensure the document is available in the event you are unable to access your offices or facilities. The document is available electronically on the web at: <a href="http://www.rcap.org">http://www.rcap.org</a>

You should also keep up-to-date plans and schematics of your treatment facility and distribution system (storage tanks, pump stations, etc), as well as up-to-date operations manuals. These should be kept in at least two secure locations, one being with the final version of this emergency response plan.



Keep this basic information easily accessible to authorized staff for emergency responders, repair people, and the news media.

#### **System information**

System Identification Number		
System Name and Address		
Directions to the System		
Basic Description and Location of System Facilities		
Location/Town		
Population Served and Service Connections from Division of Drinking Water Records	people	connections
System Owner		
Name, Title, and Phone Number of Person Responsible for Maintaining and Implementing the Emergency Plan		Phone Cell Pager
Location of treatment and distribution schematics and operations manuals		

The first response step in any emergency is to inform the person at the top of this list, who is responsible for managing the emergency and making key decisions.

#### Chain of command - lines of authority

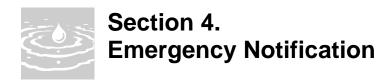
Name and Title	Responsibilities During an Emergency	Contact Numbers



The events listed below may cause water system emergencies. They are arranged from highest to lowest probable risk.

#### **Events that cause emergencies**

Type of Event	Probability or Risk (High-Med-Low)	Comments



Notification call-up lists - Use these lists to notify first responders of an emergency.

Emergency Notification List				
Organization or Department	Name & Position	Telephone	Night or Cell Phone	Email
Local Law Enforcement				
Fire Department				
Emergency Medical Services				
Water Operator (if contractor)				
EPA Contact				
Hazmat Hotline				
Interconnected Water				
System Neighboring Water				
System (not connected)				
RCAP Contact				
Rural Water Contact				

Priority Customers				
Organization or Department	Name & Position	Telephone	Night or Cell Phone	Email
Hospitals or Clinic(s)				
Public or Private Schools				
Wastewater Treatment Plant				
Adult Care Facility				

State, Federal or Tribal Notification List				
Organization or Department	Name & Position	Telephone	Night or Cell Phone	Email
State or Tribal Police				
Regulatory Agency State/Federal/Tribal				
Authorized Testing Laboratory				

Service / Repair Notifications				
Organization or Department	Name & Position	Telephone	Night or Cell Phone	Email
Electric Utility Co.				
Electrician				
Gas/Propane Supplier				
Water Testing Lab.				
Sewer Utility Co.				
Telephone Co.				
Plumber				
Pump Supplier				
"Call Before You Dig"				
Rental Equipment Supplier				
Chlorine Supplier				
Other Chemical Supplier				
Well Drilling Co.				
Pipe Supplier				

	Media N	Notification	List	
Organization or Department	Name & Position	Telephone	Night or Cell Phone	Email
Newspaper - Local				
Newspaper – Regional/State/Tribal				
Radio				
Radio				
TV Station				
-		ntial water sho	rtage	
Notification proced Notify water system		ntial water sho	rtage	
Responsible:				
Procedures:				
Alert local law enfor health agencies Who is Responsible:	cement, state, fede	ral, or tribal dri	inking water offi	cials, and local
Procedures:				
Procedures:  Contact service and	repair contractors			

Procedures:	
Contact neighb	oring water systems, if necessary
Who is Responsible:	
Procedures:	
Procedures for	issuing a health advisory
Who is Responsible:	
Procedures:	
Other procedur	res as necessary
Who is Responsible:	
Procedures:	



Communication with customers, the news media, and the general public is a critical part of emergency response.

#### **Designated public spokesperson**

Designate a spokesperson (and alternate) and contact your local primacy agency for delivering messages to the news media and the public.

#### Designate a spokesperson and alternates

Spokesperson	Alternate

#### **Health advisories**

During events when water quality and human health are in question, it may be necessary to issue a health advisory that gives advice or recommendations to water system customers on how to protect their health when drinking water is considered unsafe. These advisories are issued when the health risks to the consumers are sufficient, in the estimation of the water system, state or tribal, or local health officials, to warrant such advice.

Health advisories usually take the form of a drinking water warning or boil water advisory. Communication during these times is critical. Health advisories should always be well thought out and provide very clear messages.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has put together a number of tools, including fact sheets, brochures, forms, and templates to help prepare for a health advisory. These are on the web at: <a href="http://www.epa.gov/safewater/pn.html">http://www.epa.gov/safewater/pn.html</a>



## **Section 6.** Response Actions for Specific Events

In any event, there are a series of general steps to take:

- 1. Analyze the type and severity of the emergency;
- 2. Take immediate actions to save lives;
- 3. Take action to reduce injuries and system damage;
- 4. Make repairs based on priority demand, and
- 5. Return the system to normal operation.

The following tables identify the assessment, set forth immediate response actions, define what notifications need to be made, and describe important follow-up actions.

#### A. Power outage

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	
B. Distribution line	break
Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	

C. Chlorine treatmo	ent equipment failure
Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	
D. Treatment equip	oment
Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	
E. Source pump fa	ilure
Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

F. Microbial (colifo	orm, <i>E. coli</i> ) contamination
Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	
G. Chemical conta	mination
Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	
H. Vandalism or te	rrorist attack
Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

I. Reduction or lo	ss of water in the well
Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	
I Dugwaht	
J. Drought	
Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	
K. Flood	
Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

L. Earthquake	
Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	
M. Hazardous mate	erials spill in vicinity of sources or system lines
Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	
N. Electronic equip	oment failure
Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

Ο.	Cyber	attack
----	-------	--------

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

#### P. Other

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

#### Intertie to adjacent water supply system

Water Systems Within One-Quarter Mile of our System	Feasibility of Connecting

#### Alternate source(s) of water

Alternative Sources	Names	Phone	Availability	Is the Water Safe for Drinking?
Bottled water Suppliers for potable water use				
Tanker trucks in the area available to deliver bulk water for non potable use				

#### **Returning to normal operations**

Description and Actions



#### Plan approval

This plan is officially in effect when reviewed, approved, and signed by the following people:

Name/Title	Signature	Date

#### **Disclaimer**

This document contains information on how to plan for protection of the assets of your water system. The work necessarily addresses problems in a general nature. You should review local, state, tribal (if applicable), and federal laws and regulations to see how they apply to your specific situation.

Knowledgeable professionals prepared this document using current information. The authors make no representation, expressed or implied, that this information is suitable for any specific situation. The authors have no obligation to update this work or to make notification of any changes in statutes, regulations, information, or programs described in this document. Publication of this document does not replace the duty of water systems to warn and properly train their employees and others concerning health and safety risks and necessary precautions at their water systems.

Rural Community Assistance Partnership, Inc. assumes no liability resulting from the use or reliance upon any information, guidance, suggestions, conclusions, or opinions contained in this document.

Rural Community Assistance Partnership, Inc. 1522 K Street, N.W., Suite 400 Washington, D.C. 20005 888/321-7227