





WARN Overview:
Water & Wastewater Agency Response Network
Utilities Helping Utilities-
A Mutual Aid Example

IACC Conference
Wenatchee
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Ned Worcester
Statewide Co-Chair

Objectives

- What is a WARN? Why is WARN needed?
- How do WARN's work?
- Benefits of a WARN
- How do WARN's fit within Emergency Response and Recovery?
- How did WARNs get started?
- Getting Involved Locally

What Is a WARN?

- 💧 Network of utilities helping utilities
 - 💧 Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (WARN)
 - 💧 Not a corporation or a governmental unit
 - 💧 Both public and private utilities
- 💧 For emergency preparedness, response, and recovery activities
- 💧 United by a common enemy -
 - 💧 Natural disasters
 - 💧 Human-caused disaster
- 💧 **No cost to join - - - No obligation to respond!**

WARNs in Action

WARNs in Action



www.epa.gov/mutualaid

What Is a WARN?

- Utilities organized within a state
 - By agreement - Intrastate mutual aid agreement
 - Provides utility-to-utility sharing of resources: personnel, equipment, etc.
- May be activated with or without any type of disaster declaration
- Pre-established agreement. Once signed, ready anytime.
- Meets FEMA requirements for mutual aid
- Complies with NIMS (National Incident Management System) requirements

Because “stuff” happens utilities will need HELP!



Significant Disasters in the US

- 
- A decorative background featuring a water splash with a blue droplet falling from the top center, creating ripples and a smaller splash below it. The splash is centered behind the text.
- April 19, 1995 Oklahoma City
 - September 11, 2001 World Trade Center
 - August 29, 2005 Hurricane Katrina
 - November 2013 Super Storm Sandy
 - September 2018 Hurricane Florence
 - September 2022 Hurricane Ian

Regional Disasters 2006-2014

Washington 44 declared disasters

Severe winter storm, flooding, landslides, record snow, fire, tidal surge

Oregon 22 declared disasters

Severe winter storm, flooding, landslides, tsunami wave damage, fire

Idaho 11 declared disasters

Flooding, landslides, fire, severe winter storm

New Orleans 2005 after Katrina



1000's of pipe breaks
and other severe
utility damage

500 utility vehicles
destroyed by flooding – No
way to do repairs



10.12.2005

2022

Kentucky Floods, Jackson MI Water....



"Utilities helping utilities" with eastern Kentucky flood cleanup



Why WARN?

Lessons learned from Katrina

- 💧 Utilities are on their own until federal and state resources are mobilized (days to weeks)
 - 💧 FEMA is muscular, but not very agile
- 💧 Utility operations are specialized
 - 💧 Industry skill sets and certifications are only available in other utilities – FEMA and Army don't have
- 💧 Water restoration provides hope

Why WARN?


Lessons learned from Katrina

- 💧 Utilities need pre-disaster preparations
 - 💧 Emergency Response Plan
 - 💧 Staff trained in ICS/NIMS
 - 💧 Establish emergency contacts
 - 💧 Exercises to practice roles and scenarios
 - 💧 Business and operational continuity plan
 - 💧 Mutual Aid Agreements (MAA)

Water Sector Initiative: WARN Policy

Joint policy statement, Feb 2006

- 8 major water organizations
- Encourages the creation of intrastate mutual aid & assistance networks
- Provides for greater water sector resiliency against natural or manmade incidents



Utilities Helping Utilities

Joint Policy Statement on Mutual Aid & Assistance Networks

The water sector is committed to a "Utilities Helping Utilities" concept and is taking steps to encourage utilities and local state governments to establish intrastate mutual aid and assistance networks. The purpose of these networks is to provide a method whereby water/wastewater utilities that have sustained damage from natural or manmade events could obtain emergency assistance in the form of personnel, equipment, materials, and other associated services as necessary from other water/wastewater utilities. The objective is to provide rapid short-term deployment of emergency services to restore the critical operations of the affected water/wastewater utility.

A pre-established agreement among a network of utilities can complement and enhance local capabilities to prepare for and respond to a broad range of threats, both natural and man-made. The establishment of such intrastate mutual aid and assistance networks is a core principle of the National Preparedness Goal developed by the Department of Homeland Security.

Formalizing the existing capability to provide mutual aid and assistance provides the water/wastewater sector with a degree of resiliency against natural or manmade disaster to ensure continuity of service to our sector's customers.

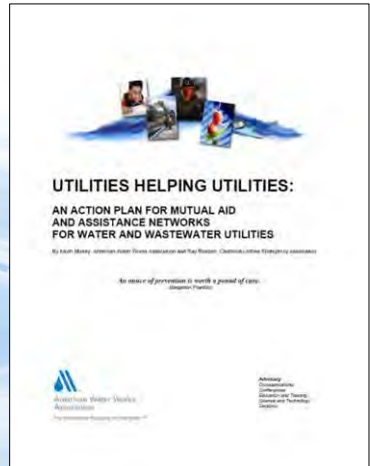
It is essential that all partners in the water and wastewater community work together to support this concept. We encourage our members to discuss this concept with peers and take the steps necessary to establish an intrastate mutual aid and assistance network.

Mutual Aid Best Policy Committee
February 27, 2006

Water Sector Initiatives: WARN Action Plan

Utilities Helping Utilities, March 2006

- Outlines 10 key steps in the formation of a WARN
- Includes sample agreement that satisfies NIMS and has been recognized by DHS NIMS Integration Center as a model agreement



National Preparedness Goal

- 💧 Purpose is to help entities at all levels of government develop and maintain the capabilities to prevent, respond to, and recover from major events or incidents of national significance.
 - 💧 Key Priority: Expand regional collaboration through mutual aid agreements and assistance compacts

National Incident Management System (NIMS)

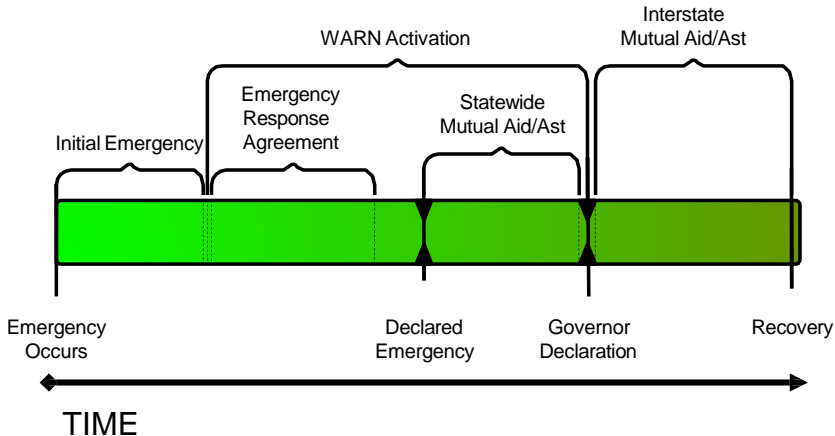
- Full compliance with NIMS is an eligibility condition for all federal preparedness assistance grants for state, territorial, tribal, & local entities.
 - These criteria include formalizing mutual aid agreements with surrounding communities and states for the purposes of sharing equipment, personnel, and facilities during emergencies.

Who's Involved?

- 💧 Utility owner/operators
- 💧 Professional association representation
 - 💧 (AWWA, NRWA, WEF, sanitation association, etc.)
- 💧 State water and wastewater primacy agencies
 - 💧 (State health, environmental protection, etc.)
- 💧 State emergency management and/or homeland security agency
 - 💧 (State EMAC coordinator)
- 💧 County EOCs – coordination of response with fire, police, etc.
- 💧 US EPA region representation

Why it Works – Bridges the Gap

WARN does not require state or federal declaration and includes private utility resources.



Benefits of Having a WARN Agreement

- 💧 Increases planning & coordination
- 💧 Provides an emergency contact list & communication tool
- 💧 Enhances access to specialized resources
- 💧 Expedites arrival of aid
 - 💧 Again: FEMA is muscular and provides support, but is not agile
- 💧 Reduces administrative conflict
 - 💧 Signed agreement in place
 - 💧 Workman's comp, indemnification, etc. identified
- 💧 Increases community and customer hope
 - 💧 The right resources with the right skills are available

Mutual Aid Agreement (MAA)

- 💧 Links all statewide utilities together
- 💧 Addresses member indemnification, workers comp, insurance and reimbursement
- 💧 Deploy only resources you have available – never obligated to respond
- 💧 Member systems may recall resources as necessary
- 💧 Meets federal reimbursement requirements

Myths about Mutual Aid Agreements

- 💧 The process is long and complicated
- 💧 The type of aid is limited to heavy equipment
- 💧 All mutual aid agreements require the State to declare an emergency before aid may be arranged
- 💧 Your utility is obligated to provide resources (i.e. equipment, personnel and supplies) to others that request assistance

Other mutual aid systems:

WAMAS: Washington Intrastate Mutual Aid System

ISBMA: Intrastate Building Safety Mutual Aid

PNEMA: Pacific NW Emergency Management
Arrangement

EMAC: Emergency Management Assistance Compact
(interstate)

Wa

Sector Specific:

Wa Tribe and LHJ (health)

Communications & Wireless providers

Electrical Utilities

A blue water splash graphic is centered on the page, with a large, faint ripple effect. The splash consists of several droplets and ripples, creating a sense of movement and freshness. The background is a solid dark blue at the top, transitioning to a lighter blue where the splash is located.

Do you think glass coffins will
be a success?

Remains to be seen.

Any other questions?

