



Emergency Response Planning Template for Public Wastewater Systems



Rural Community
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Emergency Response Planning Template for Public Wastewater Systems

RCAP Regional Offices:

If you need technical assistance to complete your Emergency Response Plan, please contact one of our state 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.glracap.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

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

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Planning Template

Introduction

Preparing an emergency response plan is an essential part of managing a wastewater system. This template can be used by small wastewater systems to help them develop such plans.

How to use the template

The template follows the outline in the RCAP ERP Guide. The Planning Guide discusses key components of emergency planning and provides examples of how you might present information in your plan. Use the Planning Guide as a tool to learn about emergency planning and then fill out the template provided here as you go through your planning process.

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, **do not** submit it to USDA/RD and 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: <http://www.rcap.org>

The Requirement for an Emergency Response Plan

The United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development (USDA/RD) is requiring that all systems that receive USDA/RD funding must complete a Security Vulnerability Assessment (SVA) and Emergency Response Plan (ERP). In addition to the USDA/RD requirements, the preparation of a SVA and ERP will help improve the management of the wastewater system and will increase the system's ability to respond to emergencies.

This guidance document can be used to help meet the requirement for developing an emergency response program for a wastewater system serving 3,300 population or fewer. Other methods or formats can also be used to meet the emergency response program requirement.

Section 1.

System Information

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

System information

System Discharge Number		
System Name and Address		
Directions to the System		
Basic Description and Location of System Facilities		
Location/Town		
Population Served and Service Connections	_____ people	_____ connections
System Owner		
Name, Title, and Phone Number of Person Responsible for Maintaining and Implementing the Emergency Plan		_____ Phone _____ Cell _____ Pager

Section 2.

Chain of Command – Lines of Authority

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

Section 4. Emergency Notification

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				
Wastewater Operator (if contractor)				
Primacy Agency Contact				
Hazmat Hotline				
Interconnected Wastewater System				
Neighboring Wastewater System (not connected)				
RCAP Contact				

Priority Customers				
Organization or Department	Name & Position	Telephone	Night or Cell Phone	Email
Hospitals or Clinic(s)				
Public or Private Schools				
Public Water System				
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				
Pipe Supplier				

Media Notification List

Organization or Department	Name & Position	Telephone	Night or Cell Phone	Email
Newspaper - Local				
Newspaper – Regional/State/Tribal				
Radio				
Radio				
TV Station				

Notification procedures

Notify wastewater system customers

Who is Responsible:	
Procedures:	

Alert local law enforcement, state, federal or tribal regulatory officials, and local health agencies

Who is Responsible:	
Procedures:	

Contact service and repair contractors

Who is Responsible:	
Procedures:	

Contact neighboring wastewater systems, if necessary

Who is Responsible:	
Procedures:	

Contact downstream water systems, if necessary

Who is Responsible:	
Procedures:	

Procedures for issuing a health advisory

Who is Responsible:	
Procedures:	

Other procedures, as necessary

Who is Responsible:	
Procedures:	

Section 5. Effective Communication

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 regulatory agency for delivering messages to the news media and the public.

Designate a spokesperson and alternates

Spokesperson	Alternate

Section 6. The Vulnerability Assessment

This is an evaluation of each wastewater system component to identify weaknesses or deficiencies that may make them susceptible to damage or failure during an emergency. It also assesses facilities for security enhancements that may guard against unauthorized entry, vandalism, or terrorism.

Facility vulnerability assessment and improvements identification

System Component	Description and Condition	Vulnerability	Improvements or Mitigating Actions	Security Improvements
Collection System				
Sewage Pumping				
Treatment				
Effluent Disposal				
Computer and Telemetry System				
Other Considerations				

Section 7.

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. Collection system blockage or line break

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

C. Collection system pumping facilities failure

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

D. Treatment system failure

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

E. Effluent disposal failure

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

F. Chemical contamination

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

G. Vandalism or terrorist attack

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

H. Flood

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

I. Earthquake

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

J. Hazardous materials spill into collection system

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

K. Electronic equipment failure

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

L. Cyber attack

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

M. Other

Assessment	
Immediate Actions	
Notifications	
Follow-up Actions	

Section 8. Returning to Normal Operation

Returning to normal operations

Action	Description and Actions

Section 9. Plan Approval

Plan approval

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

Name/Title	Signature	Date

Section 10. Certificate of Completion

I certify to the United States Department of Agriculture, Rural Development (USDA/RD) that this community wastewater system has completed an Emergency Response Plan (ERP) that incorporates the results of the Security Vulnerability Assessment (SVA) completed for the system.

I certify that this document was prepared under my direction or supervision.

Mail the completed **certificate only (do not send your SVA or ERP) to the appropriate USDA Rural Development office.**

Wastewater Systems NPDES/ID Number: _____

System Name: _____

Address: _____

Print Name of Person Authorized to Sign this Certification on behalf of the System:

_____ **Title:** _____

Signature: _____

Phone: _____ **Fax:** _____ **Email:** _____

Received Technical Assistance from the following:

- Rural Community Assistance Partnership
(CRG, Great Lakes RCAP/WSOS, MAP, RCAC, RCAP Solutions, Southeast RCAP)
- Rural Water Association

Completion of the following:

- Security Vulnerability Assessment
- Emergency Response Plan

Disclaimer

This document contains information on how to plan for protection of the assets of your wastewater 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 wastewater systems to warn and properly train their employees and others concerning health and safety risks and necessary precautions at their water systems.

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