



# 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	<a href="http://www.rcap.org">www.rcap.org</a>
Western RCAP	916/447-2854	<a href="http://www.rcac.org">www.rcac.org</a>
Southeast RCAP	866/928-3731	<a href="http://www.southeastrcap.org">www.southeastrcap.org</a>
Great Lakes RCAP	800/775-9767	<a href="http://www.glracap.org">www.glracap.org</a>
Southern RCAP	479/443-2700	<a href="http://www.crg.org">www.crg.org</a>
Northeast RCAP	800/488-1969	<a href="http://www.rcapsolutions.org">www.rcapsolutions.org</a>
Midwest RCAP	952/758-4334	<a href="http://www.map-inc.org">www.map-inc.org</a>

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

<b>System Discharge Number</b>		
<b>System Name and Address</b>		
<b>Directions to the System</b>		
<b>Basic Description and Location of System Facilities</b>		
<b>Location/Town</b>		
<b>Population Served and Service Connections</b>	_____ people	_____ connections
<b>System Owner</b>		
<b>Name, Title, and Phone Number of Person Responsible for Maintaining and Implementing the Emergency Plan</b>		_____ 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 3. Events that Cause Emergencies**

The events listed below may cause wastewater 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

## Section 4. Emergency Notification

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

<b>Emergency Notification List</b>				
<b>Organization or Department</b>	<b>Name &amp; Position</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Night or Cell Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
<b>Local Law Enforcement</b>				
<b>Fire Department</b>				
<b>Emergency Medical Services</b>				
<b>Wastewater Operator (if contractor)</b>				
<b>Primacy Agency Contact</b>				
<b>Hazmat Hotline</b>				
<b>Interconnected Wastewater System</b>				
<b>Neighboring Wastewater System (not connected)</b>				
<b>RCAP Contact</b>				

<b>Priority Customers</b>				
<b>Organization or Department</b>	<b>Name &amp; Position</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Night or Cell Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
<b>Hospitals or Clinic(s)</b>				
<b>Public or Private Schools</b>				
<b>Public Water System</b>				
<b>Adult Care Facility</b>				

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

<b>Service / Repair Notifications</b>				
<b>Organization or Department</b>	<b>Name &amp; Position</b>	<b>Telephone</b>	<b>Night or Cell Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
<b>Electric Utility Co.</b>				
<b>Electrician</b>				
<b>Gas/Propane Supplier</b>				
<b>Water Testing Lab.</b>				
<b>Sewer Utility Co.</b>				
<b>Telephone Co.</b>				
<b>Plumber</b>				
<b>Pump Supplier</b>				
<b>“Call Before You Dig”</b>				
<b>Rental Equipment Supplier</b>				
<b>Chlorine Supplier</b>				
<b>Pipe Supplier</b>				

## 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

<b>Who is Responsible:</b>	
<b>Procedures:</b>	

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

<b>Who is Responsible:</b>	
<b>Procedures:</b>	

#### Contact service and repair contractors

<b>Who is Responsible:</b>	
<b>Procedures:</b>	

**Contact neighboring wastewater systems, if necessary**

<b>Who is Responsible:</b>	
<b>Procedures:</b>	

**Contact downstream water systems, if necessary**

<b>Who is Responsible:</b>	
<b>Procedures:</b>	

**Procedures for issuing a health advisory**

<b>Who is Responsible:</b>	
<b>Procedures:</b>	

**Other procedures, as necessary**

<b>Who is Responsible:</b>	
<b>Procedures:</b>	

# 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

<b>Assessment</b>	
<b>Immediate Actions</b>	
<b>Notifications</b>	
<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	

### B. Collection system blockage or line break

<b>Assessment</b>	
<b>Immediate Actions</b>	
<b>Notifications</b>	
<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	



**C. Collection system pumping facilities failure**

<b>Assessment</b>	
<b>Immediate Actions</b>	
<b>Notifications</b>	
<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	

**D. Treatment system failure**

<b>Assessment</b>	
<b>Immediate Actions</b>	
<b>Notifications</b>	
<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	

**E. Effluent disposal failure**

<b>Assessment</b>	
<b>Immediate Actions</b>	
<b>Notifications</b>	
<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	

**F. Chemical contamination**

<b>Assessment</b>	
<b>Immediate Actions</b>	
<b>Notifications</b>	
<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	

**G. Vandalism or terrorist attack**

<b>Assessment</b>	
<b>Immediate Actions</b>	
<b>Notifications</b>	
<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	

**H. Flood**

<b>Assessment</b>	
<b>Immediate Actions</b>	
<b>Notifications</b>	
<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	

**I. Earthquake**

<b>Assessment</b>	
<b>Immediate Actions</b>	
<b>Notifications</b>	
<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	

**J. Hazardous materials spill into collection system**

<b>Assessment</b>	
<b>Immediate Actions</b>	
<b>Notifications</b>	
<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	

**K. Electronic equipment failure**

<b>Assessment</b>	
<b>Immediate Actions</b>	
<b>Notifications</b>	
<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	

**L. Cyber attack**

<b>Assessment</b>	
<b>Immediate Actions</b>	
<b>Notifications</b>	
<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	

**M. Other**

<b>Assessment</b>	
<b>Immediate Actions</b>	
<b>Notifications</b>	
<b>Follow-up Actions</b>	

## 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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