

VA WARN

VIRGINIA WATER AND WASTEWATER AGENCY RESPONSE NETWORK

The purpose of **VA WARN** is to provide a method whereby water and wastewater utilities that have sustained damages 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 and wastewater utilities and obtain assistance before a local, state or federal emergency declaration is issued. The objective is to provide rapid, short-term deployment of emergency services to restore the critical operations of the impacted utility as soon as possible.

The loss of either public water service or public sanitary sewer service has adverse impacts on the environment and public health; restoration of service will reduce adverse environmental and public health impacts. The VA WARN program is designed to accomplish restoration as soon as possible through mutual aid

Utility performance is increased by being able to tap into resources that would not otherwise be available without the WARN network; being a member of WARN enhances management performance by being proactive and planning for either man made or natural emergencies.

The **VA WARN Committee** (a joint committee created by the Virginia American Water Works Association [**VAAWWA**] and the Virginia Water Environment Association [**VWEA**]) developed the Mutual Aid Agreement (MAA). The MAA was developed taking into account the following existing forms of agreements and information:

- Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) Statewide Mutual Aid Program
- National Capital Region (NCR) Water/Wastewater MAA
- WARN model MAA developed by AWWA.

Where possible, the MAA was drafted to be consistent with the VDEM and NCR models. The benefits of doing so include increasing acceptance and approval by Virginia localities and authorities already party to one or both of those agreements, avoiding inconsistent programs, and facilitating transition from a VA WARN-level response to a response by VDEM or others after a formal emergency or disaster declaration.

Mutual Aid Agreement

- **VA WARN Mutual Aid Agreement (MAA)** – Each Member Utility would execute the MAA at the outset and would thereby become a member of the VA WARN network upon acceptance and acknowledgment by the VA WARN Committee. Key issues covered by the MAA include: Definitions, Procedure for Requesting Assistance, Use of Event Agreements, Authorized Representatives, Withdrawal from VA WARN, and Amendments to VA WARN MAA.
- **Assistance Request Form (Exhibit A of the MAA)** – In accordance with Section 2.1 of the MAA, a Member Utility may request assistance by submitting a written request using the Assistance Request Form (**an Excel spreadsheet**) or verbally requesting service (in which case the verbal request shall be followed as soon as practical by the written request using the Assistance Request Form.)
- **Event Agreement (Exhibit B of the MAA)** – The Event Agreement form is included as Exhibit B to the MAA and is used by the Requesting Utility and Assisting Utility to establish an agreement to provide and receive assistance. Key issues covered by the Event Agreement include: Scope of Assistance, Procedures for Provision of Assistance, Reimbursement, and Insurance Coverage. The Event Agreement would be signed when a Requesting Utility and Assisting Utility agree on the specific Scope of Assistance to be provided. The **Scope of Assistance** established by the Requesting and Assisting Utilities will be set forth in **Attachment A** (an **Excel spreadsheet**) to the Event Agreement.

The Mutual Aid Agreement (MAA) is structured to facilitate rapid emergency response between and among VA WARN Member Utilities. Having a signed MAA already in place and on file prior to an emergency can greatly facilitate planning and prioritizing by other Utilities responding to your requests for help in time of need.

Membership

Membership in VA WARN is open to all public and private water and wastewater systems operating within the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Virginia Water & Wastewater Agency Response Network is available for utilities to join; to access the web site, please paste vawarn.org into your browser ([http://vawarn.org/](http://vawarn.org)). **Information on VA WARN, the MAA, the authorized representative form, and membership process is available on the web site.**

To become a member, the following actions must be completed:

1. Submit the MAA to your governing body to obtain authority for your chief administrative officer to execute the MAA.
2. Complete Authorized Representative Form and provide the information requested.
3. Send the following documents to the address shown below:
 - **Copy of the MAA adopted authorizing resolution/ordinance**
 - **An executed MAA**
 - **Completed Authorized Representative Form**

MAIL TO:

Geneva Hudgins
VA AWWA
P.O. Box 11992
Lynchburg, VA 24506-1992
Phone: 434-386-3190
Fax: 434-386-3192
geneva.hudgins@vaawwa.org

Upon receiving the documents, an account will be established for your utility in the VA WARN web site. A “user name” and a temporary “password” will be established. You will be notified when the account is established; upon receiving notification, please login to change your password and verify the information for your Utility. If you need assistance or have questions, please contact Geneva Hudgins.

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