



Emergency Response Plans

An Emergency Response Plan (ERP) describes your utility's strategies, resources, plans and procedures to prepare for and respond to an incident, natural or man-made, that threatens life, property, or the environment.

Each community water system must prepare or revise, where necessary, an emergency response plan that incorporates the findings of the recently completed risk assessment required by the 2018 America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA). The ERP shall include:

1. Strategies and resources to improve the resilience of the system, including the physical security and cybersecurity of the system (**Resilience Strategies**);
2. Plans and procedures that can be implemented, and identification of equipment that can be utilized, in the event of a malevolent act or natural hazard that threatens the ability of the community water system to deliver safe drinking water (**Emergency Plans & Procedures**);
3. Actions, procedures and equipment which can obviate or significantly lessen the impact of a malevolent act or natural hazard on the public health and the safety and supply of drinking water provided to communities and individuals, including the development of alternative source water options, relocation of water intakes and construction of flood protection barriers (**Mitigation**); and
4. Strategies that can be used to aid in the detection of malevolent acts or natural hazards that threaten the security or resilience of the system (**Detection Strategies**).

EPA created ERP instructions and a template for use in creating a plan. You are not required to use EPA's template. Remember, your state drinking water program may also have ERP requirements that you must follow.

Requirements and Resources to assist are posted on EPA's webpage at:

<https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/americas-water-infrastructure-act-risk-assessments-and-emergency-response-plans>

Community water systems shall, to the extent possible, coordinate with local emergency planning committees established under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act of 1986 when preparing or revising an assessment or emergency response plan under the AWIA. Further, systems must maintain a copy of the assessment and emergency response plan for five years after certifying the plan to the EPA.

Finally, your plan is only as good as everyone's awareness of it and their roles. So train on and practice your response plan at least annually, updating as needed.

DEADLINE

This article is Part 2 in a series of articles outlining the requirements under the 2018 America's Water Infrastructure Act.

All Emergency Response Plans must be completed, and a certification provided to EPA within 6 months of completion of the certification of the risk assessment.

Electronic Submission of Certification

EPA strongly recommends electronic submission of your water system's certification statement. This is the only reporting method where EPA will be able to provide an acknowledgement of receipt of your certification statement.

Please have your PWSID number available before you begin the certification process. You will need to register each PWSID number as you begin this process. If you registered to certify your Risk Assessment, you do not need to register again.

For additional information, contact Patti Kay Wisniewski, EPA Region 3 Drinking Water Preparedness and Resilience Coordinator, at Wisniewski.patti-kay@epa.gov or 215-814-5668.