



GAWARN

# Mutual Aid/Assistance Operational Plan

GAWARN Executive Committee  
9-8-2024

*This Page Intentionally Left Blank*

# GAWARN

## Mutual Aid/Assistance Operational Plan

**Date: September 2024**

**Prepared by: GAWARN Executive Committee**

**Record of Changes Form**

Changes to this document are expected due to lessons learned, updates to protocols, and/or modification to the GAWARN Agreement. Designated authors (committee member officer's in- force) shall follow these procedures when making updates/changes to this Operational Plan:

1. Record updates/changes on the log below. (Add new pages as needed.)
2. The GAWARN Committee approves updates to this Operational Plan and electronically advises all Member utilities and Associate Members when approved updates have been made and are available on the GAWARN Web site at [www.GAWARN.org](http://www.GAWARN.org).
3. Member utilities replace old pages with current pages and destroy outdated material.

Change Number	Date of Approval	Section #, Header and Page #	Brief Description of Change	Approved by
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

Contents

1 Introduction ..... 1-1

    1.1 Purpose of an GAWARN Mutual Aid/Assistance Operational Plan ..... 1-2

    1.2 How is the GAWARN Operational Plan Organized?..... 1-2

    1.3 Preparedness Planning Assumptions..... 1-3

2 Pre-Emergency Responsibilities ..... 2-1

    2.1 Member Utility..... 2-1

    2.2 GAWARN Executive Committee ..... 2-2

        2.2.1 GAWARN Committee Chair ..... 2-3

        2.2.2 Vice Chair ..... 2-3

        2.2.3 Secretary ..... 2-3

        2.2.4 Intrastate Regional Coordinators..... 2-4

3 Training, Exercises and Updates ..... 3-1

    3.1 Training..... 3-1

    3.2 Updating the GAWARN Operation Plan..... 3-3

4 Concept of Operations ..... 4-1

    4.1 GAWARN Relation to Local and State Response ..... 4-1

    4.2 Local Government..... 4-6

    4.3 GAWARN..... 4-6

5 GAWARN Activation ..... 5-1

    5.1 Who Activates GAWARN?..... 5-1

    5.2 What is Activated? ..... 5-1

    5.3 Pre-Event Activation..... 5-1

    5.4 Notification of an Emergency/Request for Assistance ..... 5-1

    5.5 Response to a Request for Assistance ..... 5-2

6 Response Considerations..... 6-1

    6.1 Requesting Utility..... 6-1

    6.2 Responding Utility ..... 6-1

    6.3 Requesting Utility Demobilization ..... 6-2

    6.4 Responding Utility Demobilization ..... 6-2

7 GAWARN Response Coordination ..... 7-1

8 GAWARN Communication Tools ..... 8-1

    8.1 GAWARN.org..... 8-1

    8.2 Radio Systems ..... 8-2

## MUTUAL AID/ASSISTANCE OPERATIONAL PLAN

8.3	Communications on Wheels (COWs).....	8-2
9	After Action Report and Improvement Plan .....	9-1
9.1	After Action Report .....	9-1
9.2	Improvement Plan.....	9-3
10	Appendix, Forms and Checklists.....	10-1
10.1	Appendices.....	10-1
10.2	Forms.....	10-1

Figure 1 Operational Plan Purpose (OPLAN) ..... 1-2

Figure 2 Elements of the GAWARN Organizational Structure ..... 2-1

Figure 3 Utility Field Response ..... 4-4

Figure 4 Utility IC Reporting to Utility MGMT..... 4-4

Figure 5 Utility "Agency Rep" Reporting to IC and Independent Utility MGMT ..... 4-5

Figure 6 Utility "Utility Rep" Reporting as Part of City/County Government ..... 4-6

**List of Acronyms**

AWWA

American Water Works Association

DOC

Department Operations Center

EMAC

Emergency Management Assistance Compact

EOC

Emergency Operations Center

ERP

Emergency Response Plan

ESF

Emergency Support Function

FEMA

Federal Emergency Management Agency

HSEEP

Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program

HSPD

Homeland Security Presidential Directive

IAP

Incident Action Plan

IC

Incident Commander

ICS

Incident Command System

MAA or OPLAN

Mutual Aid/Assistance Operational Plan

GAEM

Georgia Emergency Management



GAEPD

Georgia Environmental Protection Division

GRWA

Georgia Rural Water Association

GAWARN

Georgia Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network

NIMS

National Incident Management System

NRF

National Response Framework

PA Program

FEMA Public Assistance Program

SERT

State Emergency Response Team

U.S. DHS

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

U.S. EPA

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

USACE

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

## **List of Definitions from the Mutual Aid/Assistance Agreement**

All definitions in the Operational Plan are consistent with the GAWARN Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement.

### Activation

Occurs when one Member utility calls another Member utility to discuss the exchange of resources.

### Advisory Board

Individual agencies appointed to offer expert advice to the GAWARN Committee. The agencies are not bound by the duties imposed on the elected committee and members utilities nor are they responsible for the implementation and activation of the mutual aid agreement.

### Associate Member

Any non-utility participant approved by the GAWARN Committee, that provides a support role for the GAWARN program and who is a member of the Regional or State GAWARN Committees and does not officially sign the GAWARN agreement.

### Authorized Official

An employee or officer of a Member authorized by the Member's governing board or management to request assistance; offer assistance; refuse to offer assistance or; withdraw assistance under the Agreement.

### Confidential Information

Information defined Rule 510-4-.02 Code of Ethics; APA Ethical Standards as confidential information or as sensitive public security information.

Any document shared with any signatory to the GAWARN Agreement that is marked confidential, including but not limited to any map, report, notes, papers, opinion, or e-mail which relates to the system vulnerabilities of a Member or Associate Member.

### Disaster

An emergency event that reaches a specific financial threshold related to magnitude or loss and property damage.

### Emergency

A natural or manmade incident that is, or is likely to be, beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of a mutual aid/assistance program member.

### Incident

In this document the term incident is used as a generic description for a planned event, a small incident, or major disaster.

Incident Command System (ICS)

A standardized on-scene emergency management system designed for use for all kinds of emergencies and is applicable to small as well as large and complex incidents. ICS is the combination of facilities, equipment, personnel procedures, and communications operating within a common organization structure, designed to aid in the management of resources during incidents.

Indemnity

Security against hurt, loss, or damage. An exemption from incurred penalties or liabilities.

Indemintee

A party to this Agreement that is entitled to be indemnified by another party to the Agreement pursuant to the terms of Article XI.

Indemnitor

A party to this Agreement that is obligated to indemnify another party to the Agreement pursuant to the terms of Article XI.

Large Water and or Wastewater Utility

A utility that is represented with a population in excess of 10,000.

Member

Any public or private water or wastewater utility that manifests intent to participate in the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program by executing the Agreement and current member of GRWA.

Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement

A formal agreement among emergency responders to lend assistance across jurisdictional boundaries when required; either by an emergency that exceeds local resources or a disaster.

Mutual Assistance

While operationally consistent with mutual aid, mutual assistance is the provision of personnel, equipment and resources with the understanding that reimbursement is expected as described in the Agreement.

The National Incident Management System (NIMS)

A national, standardized approach to incident management and response that sets uniform processes and procedures for emergency response operations.

Non-Responding Member

A Member that does not provide assistance during a period of assistance under the mutual aid/assistance agreement.

The Georgia Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network (GAWARN)

A network of Georgia public and private water and wastewater utilities united under an agreement to provide and receive mutual aid and assistance to signatories to the agreement during emergencies ranging from those that may arise from declared disasters or are specific to a single utility.

Period of Assistance

A specified period of time during which a Responding Member assists a Requesting Member. The period begins when personnel, equipment, or supplies depart from a Responding Member's facility and ends when the resources return to their facility (portal to portal). All protections identified in the Agreement apply during this period. The specified period of assistance may occur during response to or recovery from an emergency, as previously defined.

Private Water Utility

An entity that is not a unit of government that owns or operates a water and/ or wastewater utility, whether on a for-profit or not-for-profit basis.

Provider

A Member that responds to a request for assistance under the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program.

Public Utility

A unit of government that owns or operates a water and/ or wastewater utility.

Recipient

A Member who requests assistance under the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program.

Response Team

The GAWARN Mutual Aid and Assistance Program provides this rapidly deployable team in response to emergencies impacting Member Utilities. The response team consists of trained GAWARN Utility Members from unaffected utilities to help coordinate the affected GAWARN Member's response during an emergency. Small

Water and or Wastewater Utility

A utility is represented with a population less than 10,000. 3,300 to less than 50,000.

*This Page Intentionally Left Blank.*

## 1 Introduction

Mutual aid and assistance agreements such as Water/Wastewater Agency Response Networks (WARNs) help local jurisdictions respond to incidents that require resources beyond the capability of a local utility. The GAWARN Agreement identifies the administration of the GAWARN program, describes how to access mutual aid/assistance, specifies reimbursement procedures for the use of resources, and authorizes the creation of an GAWARN Mutual Aid/Assistance Operational Plan (OPLAN).

While the GAWARN Agreement is the legal instrument authorizing the exchange of resources, the GAWARN Mutual Aid/Assistance Operational Plan describes how to implement the Agreement.

The GAWARN Mutual Aid/Assistance Operational Plan is the operational extension of the Agreement and outlines the procedures that need to be in place to make the GAWARN Agreement work. Other documents such as the American Water Works Association (AWWA) Water & Wastewater Mutual Aid & Assistance Resource Typing Manual identify the type of teams and associated equipment that utilities may request to respond. All three of these documents (the GAWARN agreement, Operational Plan, and AWWA Water & Wastewater Mutual Aid & Assistance Resource Typing Manual) inter-relate and support the mission to address local emergencies. It should also be emphasized this OPLAN does not address specific Member procedures. Local job aids should be developed to help direct the tactical implementation of the OPLAN.

Figure 1 illustrates how Member utilities activate the Agreement by following the Operational Plan and illustrates that Resource Typing is integral to requesting Mutual Aid/Assistance. Exercising the Operational Plan, Resource Typing, and tactical job aids (such as fast-action binders or checklists) ensure the functionality of the GAWARN system.

## MUTUAL AID/ASSISTANCE OPERATIONAL PLAN

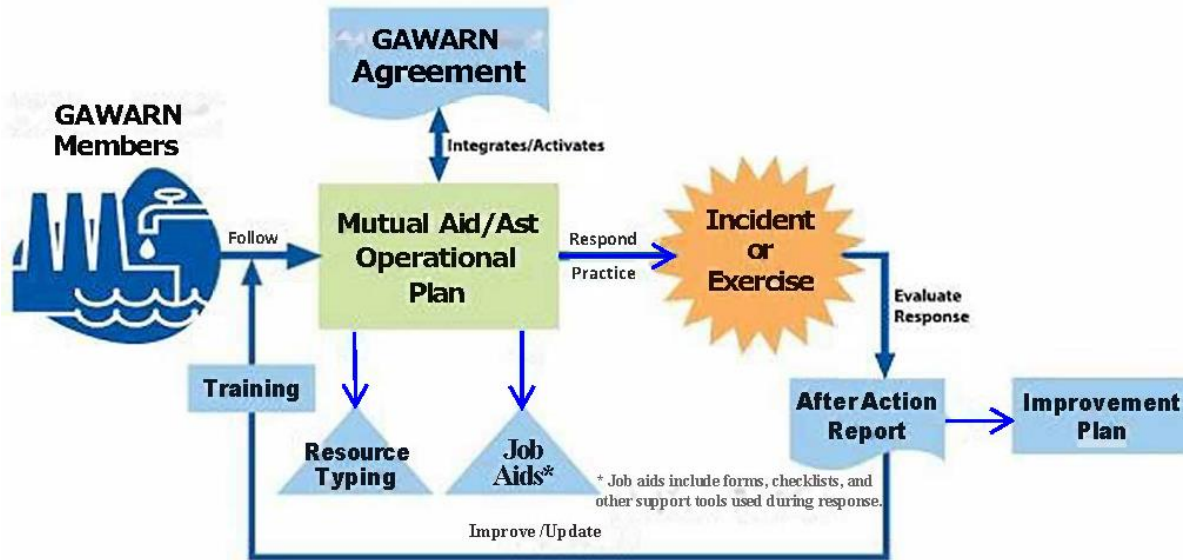


Figure 1 Operational Plan Purpose (OPLAN)

### 1.1 Purpose of an GAWARN Mutual Aid/Assistance Operational Plan

Specifically, the GAWARN Operational Plan:

- Describes pre-emergency responsibilities
- Describes training, exercises, and update procedures for the Operational Plan
- Provides a concept of emergency operations
- Provides a general set of procedures for activation of the GAWARN
- Provides a general set of procedures for mobilization of GAWARN Member utilities
- Provides a general set of procedures for GAWARN response coordination
- Describes documentation and forms for the GAWARN standard reporting formats
- Describes communications tools for GAWARN Member utilities
- Describes a general set of procedures for writing an after-action report and improvement plan

### 1.2 How is the GAWARN Operational Plan Organized?

The GAWARN Operational Plan is divided into **eight sections** and **supporting attachments**. The content and use of each are summarized in Table 1. Notably, **Sections 4, 5, 6, and 7** (the shaded sections in the table) provide instructions for the GAWARN Member utilities during an emergency.

Section	Content	For use by:	When it is used:
1.	GAWARN Pre- emergency Responsibilities and Structure	Staff responsible for administrative and preparedness activities	Pre-emergency
2.	Training, Exercise, and Updates	Staff responsible for preparedness activities	Pre-emergency
3.	Concept of Operations	Staff planning and establishing GAWARN operations prior to an emergency	Pre-emergency
4.	GAWARN Activation	Member utilities requesting assistance and Member utilities responding to requests	During GAWARN activation

## MUTUAL AID/ASSISTANCE OPERATIONAL PLAN

Section	Content	For use by:	When it is used:
5.	Response Considerations	Member utilities responding to requests	During GAWARN activation
6.	GAWARN Response Coordination	GAWARN Response Team Members helping to coordinate the GAWARN Member's response during an emergency	During GAWARN activation
7.	GAWARN Communication Tools	Member utilities requesting assistance and Member utilities responding to requests	During GAWARN activation
8.	After Action Report and Improvement Plan	Staff responsible for post-incident activities	Post-emergency
9.	Appendices, Forms, and Checklists	Member utilities requesting assistance and Member utilities responding to requests	During GAWARN activation

*Table 1 Operational Plan: Content and Purpose by Section*

### 1.3 Preparedness Planning Assumptions

Several key assumptions form the basis of this document and implementation procedures for GAWARN:

- **Emergency Response Plans are in place.** While utility-specific Emergency Response Plans (ERPs) are in place as required by State and Federal law, the GAWARN encourages all utilities to develop or update an ERP. The ERP should include how the utility uses the Incident Command System (ICS) and how the utility integrates with its local and State emergency management and response agencies, and how the ERP addresses vulnerability assessments. Additionally, ERPs from Member utilities can integrate expected GAWARN activities.
- **Designated Personnel are trained according to the ERP, ICS, NIMS, GAWARN and AWWA Water & Wastewater Mutual Aid & Assistance Resource Typing Manual.** In order to respond to all emergencies, Member utilities provide practical employee training regarding the utility ERP, ICS, and NIMS. Additional training on how to use mutual aid/assistance resources ensures the ability to coordinate response with outside agencies. [Section 2](#) of this document includes a list of recommended NIMS and ICS training. Additionally, employees can be trained according to GAWARN activities and be familiar with the AWWA Water & Wastewater Mutual Aid & Assistance Resource Typing Manual.
- **Utilities have signed a single, statewide omnibus GAWARN Agreement.** The GAWARN Agreement establishes the foundation of GAWARN and serves as the legal instrument authorizing the request for mutual aid/assistance, provides a mechanism for reimbursement, identifies the legal protection and immunities for employees and for use of resources, and establishes eligibility for possible federal reimbursement of expenditures associated with mutual aid/assistance.
- **GAWARN is coordinated with local and state authorities.** Coordinated response and access to restricted areas relies on communication and issuance of SERT Re-Entry Credential between the GAWARN and the following groups or organizations:

  - Utilities
  - Local emergency management agencies



## MUTUAL AID/ASSISTANCE OPERATIONAL PLAN

- Georgia Emergency Management (GAEM)
- GA Environmental Protection Division (GAEPD)
- Local and State law enforcement authorities

The relationship between the GAWARN, state and local agencies, and utilities, is defined by the agreement and documented in the Operational Plan. Exercising the GAWARN with the Member utilities and other response agencies facilitates a successful response with GAWARN

## 2 Pre-Emergency Responsibilities.

GAWARN Member utilities plan and prepare for a real incident prior to responding. Likewise, the GAWARN Committee relies on membership involvement to help organize the activities, plans, and resources to ensure functionality of the GAWARN. Figure 2 identifies the relationship of the committee, its officers, the Member utilities, subcommittees, and intrastate regional coordinators (aligned by GAEPD regional offices and noted by the dashed boxes).

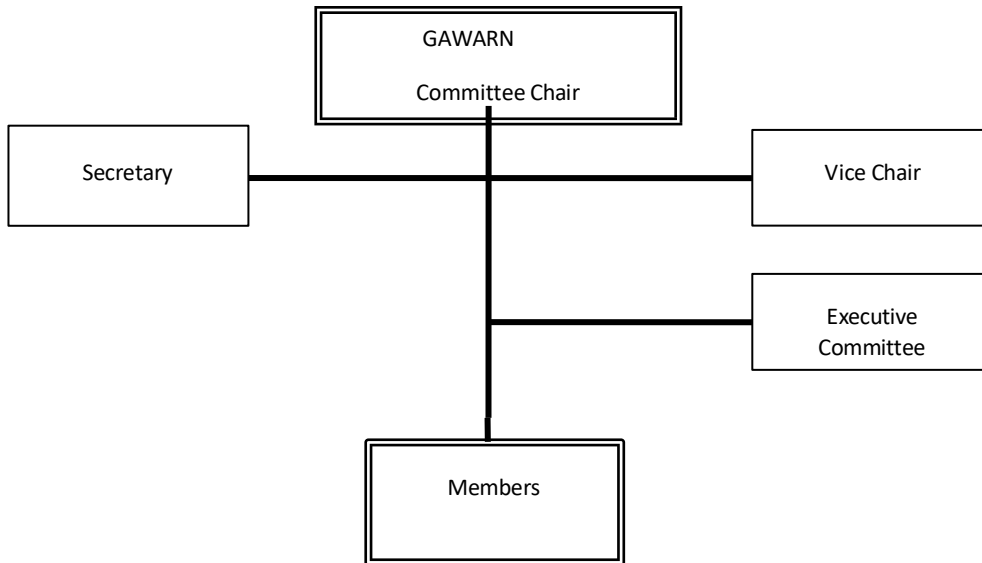


Figure 2 Elements of the GAWARN Organizational Structure

### 2.1 Member Utility

A Member utility is any public or private water or wastewater utility that manifests intent to participate in the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program by executing this Agreement. The Member utility shall identify an Authorized Representative and Alternates to manage its participation in GAWARN and response to possible incidents. Member utilities are eligible to participate in one or more committees to support the GAWARN. Additionally, the GAWARN encourages Member utilities to participate in the annual meeting, trainings, and other activities.

Member utilities also vote on updates to the Agreement and other topics related to the operations of the Agreement. Each Member has one vote. A utility that operates both water and wastewater services has one vote. A private utility with multiple service locations also has just one vote (in relation to one decision-making board).

Pre-emergency responsibilities for Member utilities include:

- Identify an Authorized Official and alternates who are responsible for:
  - Requesting Assistance
  - Offering Assistance
  - Refusing Assistance
  - Withdrawing Assistance
  
- Provide and update the GAWARN website with contact information for their Authorized Official and alternates as well as typing resources, teams, and equipment  
Per an agreement established with GRWA Develop and maintain GAWARN database information for their utility in accordance with their policy. Print a hard copy of the GAWARN database on a periodic basis (e.g. every six months) to ensure the information is available when a power loss disrupts computer access:
- Update the contact and other database information every six months or as changes occur
- Ensure employees are trained according to the current NIMS guidance and complete relevant training requirements as appropriate
- Identify procedures for how or when the Authorized Official may request or send mutual aid/assistance
- Clarify reporting and coordination procedures with the local emergency management officials
- Review the GAWARN Operational Plan and incorporate appropriate portions into the utility emergency response plan
- Develop procedures to track costs for personnel, equipment, and other resources during an emergency
- Volunteer to support the pre-emergency organization of the GAWARN system, as available
- Attend GAWARN trainings and general meetings

## 2.2 GAWARN Executive Committee

The Executive Committee, commonly referred to as the Committee, members are elected by GAWARN Member utilities. Under the leadership of the GAWARN Committee Chair (referred to as the GAWARN Chair), the Committee is responsible for the following actions:

- Organize and coordinate emergency planning and response activities for the GAWARN
- Encourage the active participation of Member utilities
- Establish regular meeting schedules to maintain continuity
- Maintain communication with Member utilities regarding updates, changes, or modifications to the GAWARN system
- Maintain the Operational Plan for implementing the GAWARN agreement

- Obtain and manage grants as available
- Determine costs associated with hosting workshops, training, etc.
- Set training and exercise schedule
- Represent the membership when engaged in meetings, discussions, and consultations with other associations, states, and local agencies regarding GAWARN

The GAWARN Executive Committee consists of:

- GAWARN Committee Chair
- Vice Chair
- Secretary
- Intrastate Regional Coordinators

### 2.2.1 GAWARN Committee Chair

The GAWARN Committee Chair is elected by the members of the GAWARN Executive Committee. The Intrastate Regional Chairs (elected by the local Member utilities) and the Executive Committee Chairs (optional) elect the GAWARN Committee Chair who is responsible to:

- Represent the GAWARN Member utilities to GA Emergency Management (GAEM), GA Environmental Protection Division (GAEPD), in emergency planning matters
- Preside at all duly constituted meetings of the membership
- Act as the Executive of the GAWARN Committee and an *ex officio* member of all standing committees
- Notified of all activations of the agreement
- Receive notice of Member withdrawal
- Provide written notice of proposed changes in the agreement 60 days prior to a vote
- Address Mutual Aid and Assistance Program issues

### 2.2.2 Vice Chair

The Vice Chair is elected by the members of the GAWARN Executive Committee. The Vice Chair performs duties as assigned by the Chair. During a temporary absence of the GAWARN Committee Chair, the Vice Chair provides direction to the GAWARN Committee. In case the GAWARN Committee Chair retires, resigns, or experiences a long-term absence, the Vice Chair acts in place of the Chair until the GAWARN Committee elects a new Chair. It is desired that the Vice Chair move to the Committee Chair position because it is perceived as beneficial to continuity, but it is not a requirement.

### 2.2.3 Secretary

The Chair appoints the Secretary, who is responsible to record proceedings at all meetings of the GAWARN Committee, and:

- Edit and publish any official administrative publications for the GAWARN Committee

- Receive and maintain a file of notes and records for the GAWARN Committee and subcommittees
- Send official messages approved by the Chair to Member utilities – either directly or through the Intrastate Region Chairs
- Perform other administrative duties as assigned
- Maintains historical files of GAWARN

#### 2.2.4 Intrastate Regional Coordinators

GAWARN state regions may align with or overlap GAEM, GAEPD. Member utilities nominate and elect Intrastate Regional Coordinators from the same state region and who are responsible to:

- Represent Member utilities of the identified region on the GAWARN Committee
- Attend GAWARN Committee meetings
- Vote on matters pertaining to the operation and management of the GAWARN
- Coordinate regional activity with the GAEM and other agencies
- Support members through the State Emergency Operations Center during a declared disaster
- Assist with the preparation of the annual meetings and trainings

### 3 Training, Exercises and Updates

#### 3.1 Training

GAWARN suggests ongoing training as described in this training plan to prepare Member utilities, Response Team Members and other relevant stakeholders. The training plan includes common training to enhance response with mutual aid/assistance resources and ensure the ability to coordinate response with outside agencies. Available online courses can be accessed at <https://training.fema.gov/is/crslist.aspx> while in-person suggested trainings can be found ,to include registration, at <https://terms.GAEM.org/TRS/> .Each Member Utility is responsible to ensure designated employees:

- Understand the GAWARN Agreement
- Review the GAWARN Mutual Aid/Assistance Operational Plan
- Understand the GAWARN web site, database, and other communication protocols
- Understand the AWWA Water & Wastewater Mutual Aid & Assistance Resource Typing Manual
- Review the utility's safety procedures and Emergency Response Plan

Suggested training for Member Utility representative:

- ICS-100.Pwb Introduction to the Incident Command System for Water Sector Personnel (FEMA Online)
- IS-200 ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents (FEMA Online)
- IS-300 Intermediate ICS, Expanding Incidents (Classroom Instruction Only)
- IS-400 Advanced ICS, Command and General Staff – Complex Incidents (Classroom Instruction Only)
- IS-700 National Incident Management System, An Introduction (FEMA Online)
- IS-800.B National Response Framework (NRF), An Introduction (FEMA Online)
- IS-803 Emergency Support Function (ESF) #3- Public Works and Engineering (FEMA Online)
- IS-860 Introduction to the National Infrastructure Protection Plan (FEMA Online)

Suggested training for Member Utility representatives who are on the Operations Subcommittee:

- IS-630 Introduction to the Public Assistance Program (FEMA Online)
- IS-631 Public Assistance Operations I (FEMA Online)
- IS-632 Introduction to Debris Operations in FEMA's Public Assistance Program (FEMA Online)
- IS-701 Multi-agency Coordination Systems (FEMA Online)
- IS-703 NIMS Resource Management (FEMA Online)
- IS-706 NIMS Intrastate Mutual Aid - An Introduction (FEMA Online)
- GAEM Damage Assessment (Classroom Instruction Only)
- GAEM Debris Management (Classroom Instruction Only)

Suggested training for Member Utility representatives who are on the Training Subcommittee:

- GAEM HSEEP Training Course (Classroom Instruction Only)
- IS-120.a An Introduction to Exercises (FEMA Online)
- IS-130 Exercise Evaluation and Improvement Planning (FEMA Online)

The training plan can include courses or instructions on how to complete the GAWARN Operational Plan documentation, including:

- Damage assessment

## MUTUAL AID/ASSISTANCE OPERATIONAL PLAN

- Tracking and documenting expenses using existing utility accounting forms
- Reimbursement following local and state emergency agencies' processes and procedures

### 3.2 Updating the GAWARN Operation Plan

Following an incident or exercise, as requirements change, or every five (5) years, (whichever is soonest), the Executive Committee may accept comments on the Operational Plan from Member utilities. GAWARN Member utilities will be notified that comments are being accepted. Feedback will be collected by the Executive Committee and consolidated into the Operational Plan as appropriate. The GAWARN Executive Committee reviews the comments and approves any revisions to the GAWARN Operational Plan. The GAWARN Executive Committee communicates approved Operational Plan changes to GAWARN Members and Advisory Board representatives and those persons who are assigned roles within the plan.

While the GAWARN Executive Committee will inform and provide information to the Member utilities to train on the changes to the Operational Plan, it is the utility and Advisory Board representatives' responsibility to integrate the updated Operational Plan into their respective emergency response or emergency operations plans.

Any suggested changes that impact the agreement are handled separately from the Operational Plan updates. Two appointed legal representatives from Member utilities may review the suggestions to determine the impact on the agreement. Based on review of the impacts, the GAWARN Executive Committee determines whether to submit the changes for a vote to the Member utilities. An announcement of the proposed changes is made to each Member utility that includes a ballot and deadline for a vote. Results of the vote will be shared with the Member utilities. Member utilities not in agreement with the changes may determine whether to continue with the GAWARN program. The Planning Subcommittee reviews the Operational Plan and submits revisions to the GAWARN Committee for approval. Upon approval of the GAWARN Executive Committee, the Secretary makes the changes and distributes the revisions to the GAWARN membership, and Advisory Board.

Any Member utility may also submit recommendations for revisions to the Operational Plan in writing to the Chair. The Chair will distribute the recommended revisions Executive to the Planning Committee for review and a decision to submit the revisions to the GAWARN Executive Committee. The Planning Committee may recommend notice to the GAWARN membership for comment and establish a comment period prior to the vote of the GAWARN Committee on member suggested revisions. If notice to the GAWARN membership is recommended, the Secretary will publish the notice and comment period to the GAWARN membership, receive and record comments, and submit the comments back to the Planning Committee.



*This Page Intentionally Left Blank*

## 4 Concept of Operations

### 4.1 GAWARN Relation to Local and State Response

The relationship between GAWARN and the local and state emergency response system is critical. This Operational Plan and other NIMS concepts enable local jurisdictional authorities to benefit from standard practices and frameworks. According to NIMS, local jurisdictions retain command, control, and other authority over response activities for their jurisdictional areas<sup>1</sup>. Incidents typically begin and end locally and are managed on a daily basis at the lowest possible geographical, organizational, and jurisdictional level. Local jurisdictions also have flexibility to adjust the scale and scope of their response to the emergency.

Depending on the size of the emergency, all levels of response described below may not be needed every time the GAWARN is activated. As all emergencies are local, if the resource needs can be addressed by one utility calling another that may be all that is needed. Communication with the GAWARN Regional Coordinator is suggested so that the Executive Committee is aware that resources were requested. This can be accomplished via e-mail if available or contact with one designated person from the Operations Committee. In emergencies that affect more than one locality, coordination at the county level may be necessary. In an emergency that affects multiple counties, coordination at the state level may be necessary.

<b>Role:</b>	<b>Description of Activity:</b>
Utility Field Personnel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are the utility employees in the field responding to an emergency.</li> <li>• Homeland Security Act of 2002 (P.L.107-296) and Homeland Security Presidential Directive (HSPD) 8 identifies local utilities as first responders.</li> <li>• As first responders, utility employees in the field are trained and function within the Incident Command System (ICS).</li> <li>• Field personnel report to their respective employer utility while coordinating response with local emergency response agencies (e.g. law, fire and rescue, emergency medical, etc.). This is known as unity of command in ICS.</li> <li>• May utilize active SERT re-entry credential during an eligible event.</li> </ul>
Utility (Private or Public)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public utilities can either be part of a city or county agency, or they can be an independently governed special district, not affiliated with a city or county. Public utilities comply with specific requirements, including the use of NIMS, to be eligible for federal preparedness grants.</li> <li>• Private utilities are generally investor owned and operated. While private utilities are not required to comply with NIMS, most choose to follow NIMS protocols as a best practice approach.</li> <li>• If the local utility is a city or county department or work unit, the utility may establish a department operations center (OC) and/or report directly to the appropriate city or county Emergency Operations Center (EOC).</li> <li>• Special districts or independent utilities may activate an agency OC, and/or depending on the number of cities or counties served, the utility may directly report to or participate with a city, county, or state EOC.</li> </ul>
Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depending on the size and complexity of an emergency, local governments</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> Page 12. National Incident Management System. December 2008.

## MUTUAL AID/ASSISTANCE OPERATIONAL PLAN

<b>Role:</b>	<b>Description of Activity:</b>
(Cities)	<p>may operate EOCs to coordinate resources and manage operations within the jurisdiction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Local governments may assist the local utility with the emergency, provided that local resources and supplies are available and that Local Government response resources are available and can be dedicated to this responsibility.</li><li>• If necessary, the city may request county and state assistance.</li></ul>
County Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Typically led by county management, a county EOC may be activated to coordinate the emergency response actions of all jurisdictions within the boundary of the county.</li><li>• Upon request or when response to disruption of local drinking water or wastewater systems becomes a priority for the county), staff may be identified to help coordinate county resources to assist cities, special districts, and local utilities.</li><li>• If necessary, the county may request State assistance.</li></ul>
GAWARN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Designated GAWARN representatives may sit in the county and/or state EOC to facilitate information flow from damaged utilities, identify utility mutual aid/assistance resources, and coordinate response.</li><li>• If the GAWARN representatives do not sit in the state EOC, a representative may represent GAWARN in the EOC remotely using WebEOC, or the GAWARN representative may meet at a designated facility, a Member utility's Operations Center, or at the county and/or city EOC to help coordinate GAWARN Member utility mutual aid/assistance response.</li><li>• Depending on the organizational plan, when in a city, county, or state EOC, the GAWARN representatives could be seated in the Operations Section, Planning Section, Response Coordination group, or another designated reporting location.</li></ul>
State Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• As needed, the state coordinates state and regional resources to assist the cities and counties.</li><li>• Typically led by state management, a state EOC may be activated to coordinate the emergency response actions of all jurisdictions within the state.</li><li>• Upon request or when response to disruption of local water distribution becomes a priority, staff from GAEPD, GAEPD may be identified to help coordinate state resources to assist counties, cities, special districts, and local utilities.</li><li>• As needed, the state may request assistance from the National Guard, drinking water primacy agency, wastewater permitting authority, other states (through EMAC), or federal government agencies.</li></ul>
Federal Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Upon request, or when local drinking water or wastewater system disruption necessitates federal assistance, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) coordinates federal emergency response resources through Emergency Support Function #3 (ESF #3), Public Works and Engineering. As the ESF #3 primary agency, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) is responsible for coordinating supplemental assistance to state and local jurisdictions.</li></ul>

**Role:**

**Description of Activity:**

- As a support agency to ESF #3, the U.S. EPA works closely with USACE and FEMA. U.S. EPA is the lead federal agency responsible to support the water sector as detailed in HSPD-7.
- Federal emergency response resources may also be coordinated through ESF #10 (Oil and Hazardous Materials Response) where EPA is responsible for decontamination of water infrastructure and ambient water quality.
- ESF #8 (Public Health and Medical Services), in coordination with ESF #3 and ESF #10, may assist in assessing potable water, wastewater, solid waste disposal, and other environmental health issues; conducting field investigations, including collection and laboratory analysis of relevant samples; providing water purification and wastewater/solid waste disposal equipment and supplies; and providing technical assistance and consultation on potable water and wastewater/solid waste disposal issues.

GAWARN has a seat in the Infrastructure Section of the State EOC as a State Emergency Response Team (SERT) partner. A tactical action binder and copy of the OPLAN are maintained there for responding GAWARN Staff.

During a local EOC activation or a State declared disaster, individual utilities may contact their County Emergency Manager or EOC or may contact another GAWARN member utility. If another GAWARN member utility is contacted directly during a declared disaster, the requesting utility must inform the County or State EOC of the GAWARN mutual aid requested of assure there is no duplication of efforts to provide assistance and to protect potential reimbursement.

**Response Considerations by Role**

All emergencies are local and begin with the field<sup>2</sup> response. It is important for a utility to understand how to optimize the Incident Command System (ICS) principles and activities identified in the National Incident Management System (NIMS) and in ICS 100, ICS 200, and ICS 300 training courses. GAWARN encourages members to obtain appropriate ICS training to have a greater understanding of their specific role in an ICS situation. The following pages are a brief guide on how to fit into the ICS structure.

**Field Response**

Using the Incident Command System (ICS), designated utility field personnel manage personnel and resources to carry out tactical decisions and activities in direct response to an incident or threat. **Figure 3** demonstrates utility field personnel actions at a remote facility, plant, or main break.

---

<sup>2</sup> “Field” refers to any response remote from the utility headquarters. This could include response to a filter plant, pumping plant, pump station, main break, etc.

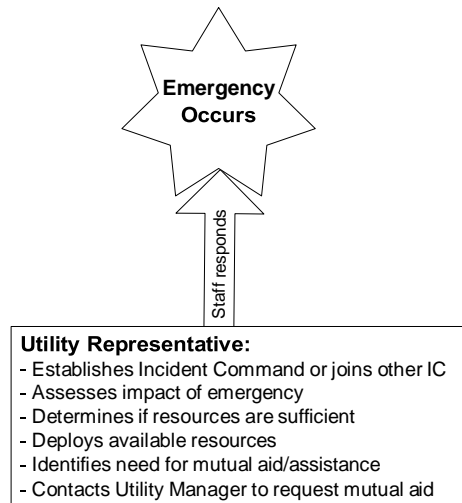


Figure 3 Utility Field Response

When the incident is a utility-specific event (such as a major water main break, or damage to a treatment plant, water pump, or enclosed clean water reservoir, etc.) the first utility responder to the scene becomes the Incident Commander (IC). The role of command remains at the field scene. The IC characterizes the scene, assesses the impact to the immediate surroundings, manages access to the scene, monitors the conditions and can best identify the resources required and where incoming resources specifically report. Additionally, the IC communicates with the utility’s management, who directs all available resources of the utility to address the need of the emergency. In this case, the communication from the scene is a direct connection to the utility management. **Figure 4** demonstrates this direct communication link to the utility management where the decision to request mutual aid/assistance is made. Command remains in the field with the IC until command is transferred to another person in the field who is more qualified to handle the event, or the designated time for shift change is reached.

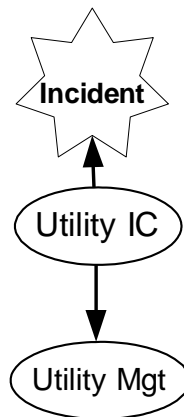
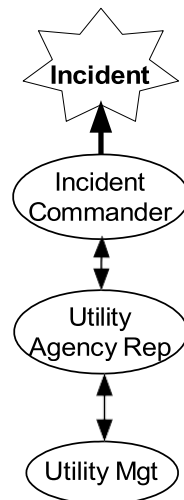


Figure 4 Utility IC Reporting to Utility MGMT

In the event the utility is called to respond to an incident where a law, fire, or public works Incident Commander (IC) is already identified, the utility responder becomes a part of the established response organization. According to ICS, when a person represents an agency (utility in this case) at the Incident

Command Post, they are called an “Agency Representative.” The primary responsibility of the utility Agency Representative is to coordinate response of the utility management with the needs of the emergency and provide support to the Incident Commander (IC).

While working with the Incident Commander (IC), the utility Agency Representative establishes contact with utility management to report conditions and progress. **Figure 5** demonstrates how a utility Agency Representative from an independent utility reports to a law, fire, or public works IC while communicating with his or her utility management about the incident and resource needs. Utility management policies and response plans determine the exact reporting relationship and responsibilities. As a result, reporting relationships and responsibilities may vary by utility.



*Figure 5 Utility "Agency Rep" Reporting to IC and Independent Utility MGMT*

While command remains in the field with the Incident Commander (IC), for a utility that is part of a city or county government, the utility management may activate a Department Operations Center or Utility Operations Center to rally resources of the department to coordinate its response. The utility department may have to coordinate its response with other portions of the local government. **See Figure 6.**

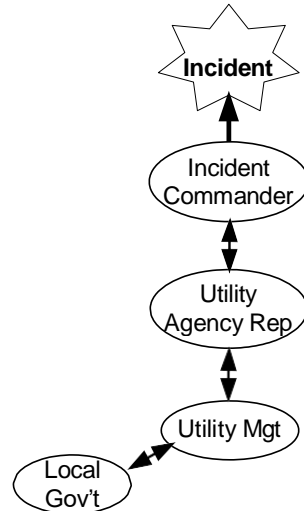


Figure 6 Utility "Utility Rep" Reporting as Part of City/County Government

## 4.2 Local Government

City and county governments respond to an emergency as dictated by their local emergency plans. For a city or county to declare an emergency, the jurisdiction needs to know the extent of damage in the local area (including impact on utilities) and the need for mutual aid/assistance. It would be appropriate for an GAWARN Member utility in need to inform the local emergency management authority of the following information which is captured in the checklists and forms in the attachments to this plan:

- The Member utility which activated the GAWARN Agreement
- Resources on their way
- The Member utility that is supplying the resources
- When to expect the arrival of resources
- The safe routes for ingress and access to staging locations

The city and/or county may designate specific staff to coordinate information and the needs of utilities within the city or county. The city and/or county employee needs to be educated on what the GAWARN program is and how it can assist the city or county in responding to the needs of the utility community. In this case the GAWARN Members are encouraged to communicate with the city or county. This coordination with local government is important, especially if local government establishes access controls limiting people entering a disaster area. As a local government needs assistance, the county may be requesting help and coordinating response with the state government.

## 4.3 GAWARN

Once an GAWARN Executive Committee (or Intrastate Regional Coordinator) member is contacted, the GAWARN system is activated. Initially, the GAWARN may be managed remotely using virtual technology (such as teleconference, e-mail communication tools or the GAWARN.org website) to manage the information and response. As the need for coordination increases, trained volunteers from GAWARN Member utilities that are not affected by the emergency may be requested to help with coordination of the GAWARN. These volunteers from the GAWARN Response Team (explanation of if or how these volunteers' resources are reimbursed is described in [Section 6](#) of this Operational Plan). The key responsibility would be to match needs with resources offered by utilities not affected by the emergency. During large events, the GAWARN Response Team Members could be located at the state EOC or a local EOC near the

incident location. Alternately, the GAWARN Response Team Members could be located at an unaffected utility. In small events, GAWARN Response Team Members could be located at a county or local EOC.



*This Page Intentionally Left Blank*

## 5 GAWARN Activation

Following an incident, each Member Utility initiates a damage assessment and evaluates its resource needs. When a Member Utility determines that mutual aid/assistance is warranted, it has three options for receiving mutual aid and assistance: local mutual aid agreements, GAWARN, or an existing Statewide Mutual Aid Agreement.

### 5.1 Who Activates GAWARN?

Any Member Utility of GAWARN can determine that it needs the assistance of another Member Utility and therefore can decide to activate the WARN Agreement. The WARN Agreement can be activated by a Utility-to-Utility request preferably via the GAWARN website by opening an emergency or via direct contact between Utilities. A Member Utility activating the WARN Agreement is referred to as the Requesting Utility. When the resources of a Responding Utility fill the need of the Requesting Utility, the Authorized Representatives confer and agree on the terms of deployment.

### 5.2 What is Activated?

The WARN Agreement provides the terms of reimbursement to the Responding Utility and a release of liability for services provided. It does not determine the response times, amenities provided to the Responding Utility, or any other operations-specific needs. In addition, the WARN Agreement does not dictate the activation of the EOC of the Responding Utility. These items are determined by dialogue between the Requesting Utility and a Responding Utility at the time of the emergency.

### 5.3 Pre-Event Activation

Some types of emergencies (e.g., severe storms or hurricanes) can be characterized as “warning” or “notice” events due to a build-up of intensity over time and/or scientific methods of predicting an event. This type of event allows Member Utilities to anticipate the magnitude of damage and therefore response needs. Activating prior to the disaster opens the lines of communication and coordination among Member Utilities, which helps to ensure a timely and proactive response. The Requesting Utility can initiate the following activities:

- Notify Member utilities of the expected conditions
- Maintain contact with Member Utilities about changing conditions and information
- Receive requested resources and identify follow-up actions

Other disasters provide no warning or notice (e.g., earthquakes), or end up impacting a Utility in a greater way than anticipated (e.g., flash flooding). Activations during these events do not have the added benefit of pre-event planning.

### 5.4 Notification of an Emergency/Request for Assistance

Notification occurs when a Requesting Utility notifies a Member Utility that they need resources. Initial communication occurs preferably via the GAWARN website. If conducted via phone or email, the GAWARN Request form found in [Section 10](#) may be used.

**(Form A: GAWARN Emergency Notification and Request Form)**

The utility requesting mutual aid/assistance gathers the following information:

- Type of incident

- Impact on Utility
- Number of agencies in response
- Known limitations or restrictions
- Available communication tools

### 5.5 Response to a Request for Assistance

A Member Utility is not obligated to respond to a request. Once a Member Utility receives a request for assistance, the Authorized Representative evaluates whether or not to respond. The Authorized Representative considers these questions:

- Does my Utility have the resources requested?
- Do the resources meet the operational requirements that the Requesting Utility identified (refer to the AWWA Water & Wastewater Mutual Aid & Assistance Resource Typing Manual)?
- Did this event impact normal operation?
- If we provide resources, can we maintain our ability to respond to unanticipated needs?

If the Authorized Representative determines that resources are available to respond to the Requesting Utility, thereafter the Member utility is referred to as a Responding Utility. The Authorized Representative of the Responding Utility communicates, as soon as possible, with the Requesting Utility that it is available to respond and provides the approximate arrival time of such assistance. When possible, the Authorized Representatives of both the Requesting and Responding Utilities will confirm all verbal agreements with written documentation preferably through the GAWARN website or otherwise via email. If conducted via phone or email, the GAWARN Responding Utility Authorization and Contact form found in [Section 10](#) may be used.

([Form B: GAWARN Responding Utility Authorization and Contact Form](#))

In addition, the Authorizing Representatives will clarify and agree upon the following items:

- Requesting Utility's ability to provide care and shelter (food, sleeping arrangements, first aid, etc.) for personnel and resources,
- Reimbursement process to determine whether the Responding Utility follows the reimbursement article of the WARN Agreement, and
- What aid the Responding Utility can provide, the cost, and confirmation of the approval from the Authorized Representative and the Member Utility's management to provide aid.

## MUTUAL AID/ASSISTANCE OPERATIONAL PLAN

If agreement is reached on the above items, the Authorized Representatives will accept the offer of assistance via the website, phone call or complete and transmit the appropriate authorization forms described in [Section 5: Response Considerations](#).

*This Page Intentionally Left Blank*

## 6 Response Considerations

Upon agreement of two or more Member Utilities to share their resources, both the Requesting Utility and the Responding Utility are responsible for ensuring the safe and effective use of their resources. This section provides basic considerations for response based on lessons learned from previous disasters.

### 6.1 Requesting Utility

In general, the Requesting Utility is responsible to complete the following tasks:

- Use the AWWA Water & Wastewater Mutual Aid & Assistance Resource Typing Manual to determine how to type the resources requested and which Member Utilities can potentially meet that need, use the FEMA Schedule of Equipment Rates to determine potential Responding Utility reimbursement.
- Preferably use the [GAWARN](#) website to open emergency and request assistance. Alternately, the Utility may use [Form A: GAWARN Emergency Notification and Request Form](#) to initiate the mutual aid/assistance process and then transmit the form to potential Responding Utility(ies) via email. The Utilities may follow-up with a phone call to discuss resource needs and conditions of use, such as duration of response commitment, potential ancillary fees etc., with potential Responding Utility(ies) to accept assistance and coordinate response activities.
- If necessary, assign a Mutual Aid Coordinator to address care, feeding, and other support for incoming mutual aid personnel.
- If necessary, notify local emergency management coordinating partners, all law enforcement agencies coordinating check points, and the Operational Area of the incoming mutual aid. If deemed necessary, identify a Staging Area and assign a Staging Area Manager for incoming mutual aid. See Staging Area Manager Checklist found in [Section 11](#).
- Identify work assignments for the incoming mutual aid
- Consider how to integrate incoming mutual aid resources with existing workforce, and
- Develop a demobilization plan that includes protocols on how and when mutual aid resources will be released.

### 6.2 Responding Utility

In general, the Responding Utility is responsible to complete the following tasks:

(See Responding Utility Procedures in [Section 9](#) for step by step process.)

- If responding to an emergency opened via [the GAWARN website](#), phone call or email, review and determine if request can be met.
- If the request can be met, provide the Requesting Utility with a list of resources available, responding personnel contact information and any other pertinent information relative to the response activity, such as system specific ancillary

fee schedule, preferably via the website or alternately via email utilizing **Form B: GAWARN** Responding Utility Authorization and Contact Form.

- Identify supervisors and staff to respond to the Requesting Utility and consider which employees can adapt to the environment of the incident (consider physical, mental health & environmental impacts).
- Estimate the cost per hour of responding equipment and personnel and relay estimated response cost to the Requesting Utility when appropriate.
- Develop a Communications Plan between supervisors of the responding teams and the Responding Utility.
- Conduct a deployment briefing with all staff on the responding teams. Include the following items:
  - o ICS refresher courses and command structure of incident, if known
  - o Pre-deployment health and safety considerations, including but not limited to, immunizations, special tools, and/or clothing
  - o Environmental conditions and shelter arrangements
  - o Rules of conduct during deployment, including but not limited to, activities allowed after work hours
  - o Review of documentation procedures
- Inform Requesting Utility of the Responding Utility's deployment and estimated time of arrival.

### 6.3 Requesting Utility Demobilization

Following standard ICS practices of demobilization, the Requesting Utility writes a demobilization plan on how to coordinate the return of resources, including the debriefing of staff and the inspection of equipment and materials. The plan should:

- Capture personnel evaluations and identify future tactical resource needs. This would be conducted by both the Requesting Utility prior to releasing the personnel, as well as by the Responding Utility once its personnel are back.
- Identify release priorities and procedures. This would include internal resources, mutual aid resources, and any contracted resources.

### 6.4 Responding Utility Demobilization

While preparing to demobilize and prior to leaving, the Responding Utility's team is responsible to complete the following tasks:

- Deliver any documentation collected but not previously submitted during response to the Requesting Utility

## MUTUAL AID/ASSISTANCE OPERATIONAL PLAN

- Return any sensitive or confidential information to the Requesting Utility, and
- Collect all information on costs and process it through the Requesting Utility Finance and Administration Function. Keep copies of all cost documentation for Responding Utility Information including:
  - o Injury reports
  - o Timesheets of Material purchased and Equipment used

If applicable, the Responding Utility will prepare appropriate invoices as described in [the GAWARN Agreement](#).



*This Page Intentionally Left Blank*

## 7 GAWARN Response Coordination

The GAWARN Response Team is organized to assist as part of a Multi-Agency Coordination (MAC) system when water sector utilities need support. At the county or state level the GAWARN Response Team may become part of an Area Command. The general responsibilities include the following (See **Attachment I: Response Team Member Checklist** for more detail):

- Coordinate and compile damage reports from utilities
- Coordinate damage assessment activities with other agencies, e.g., county emergency management agencies, utility engineers, GAEPD, etc.
- Log, track, and display damage assessment information
- Provide damage assessment information to the GAWARN Leader or designated resource coordination Response Team Member to facilitate incident prioritization
- Assemble and maintain information concerning critical facilities and special needs facilities associated with each utility included in the GAWARN Operational Plan
- Transmit Damage Assessment Reports to the other appropriate agencies, as requested
- Support mutual aid crews in the field interacting with the public to gather more information as the emergency unfolds, and methods to gather damage information
- Coordinate damage data with the state and FEMA responders to assist in the recovery process
- Act as a liaison to the Utilities Branch of the county, region, and/or state level emergency operation centers
- Identify one member of the GAWARN Response Team to represent GAWARN at the incident briefings and meetings
- Monitor the number of requests
- Identify possible sources of additional support for GAWARN Member Utilities
- Identify gaps in the requests and resources available
- Response Team EOC representative will post information and requests on WebEOC as appropriate
- Response Team EOC representative will maintain interface with SERT partners at State or Local EOC

The GAWARN Response Team may coordinate various activities. The type of incident and extent of damage may determine exactly which activities are required. As the incident expands each GAWARN Response Team Member may be assigned to focus on just one activity (the **Attachment I: GAWARN Response Team Member Checklist** is formatted to facilitate this concept) and interface with the GAWARN EOC representative:

- Manage Damage Assessment Data
- Receive, Track, and Monitor Requests
- Coordinate Resource Orders
- Coordinate Staging Area Information.

*This Page Intentionally Left Blank*

## 8 GAWARN Communication Tools

The primary communications tools available to the GAWARN Member utilities include the typical systems of landline telephone, cellular phone, fax, and e-mail. A unique aspect of the GAWARN program is use of the GAWARN Web site, when established, will bring all of these systems together. The Web site will include a list of GAWARN Member utilities and the contact information for each Member utility.

Questions during response can be addressed by calling GAWARN Committee or Response Team contacts.

### 8.1 GAWARN.org

The GAWARN operates a website which allows Member Utilities to access relevant and up-to-date information before, during, and after an emergency. The website includes a public and Member-only side. The public side allows for promoting and marketing the WARN and educating the general public on preparedness efforts of water/wastewater Utilities. The Member-only side of the website allows access to information such as:

- Utility Member Contact Information
- Resource Requests
- Damage Assessment Reporting
- Emergency and Lessons Learned Forum

The GAWARN website allows a Member Utility to identify resources directly and lists the contact information for Member Utilities to contact one another to inquire about the availability of resources and request their use. Every six months Member utilities are encouraged to print out a hard copy of the database, so that when power or Internet is not available during an emergency, the data is still available. The GAWARN website instructions are included in this plan on how to access online information.

The website includes contact information for the Executive Steering Committee. Issues or questions during response can be addressed by communicating with the Steering Committee. Member Utilities are encouraged to print out their contact information sheets and keep them with the hard copy of database resources.

For more information reference the GAWARN Website Membership Basics Appendix.

## 8.2 Radio Systems

Secondary communication tools are utility-owned 800 MHz or other radio systems. Radio is secondary due to the lack of interoperability between radios. Interoperability of radio systems would be optimal, but cannot always be achieved, due to expense. It is preferable that GAWARN Member utilities consider alternative plans to achieve the same result. GAWARN Member utilities can maintain a cache of additional radios to distribute to incoming mutual aid/assistance supervisors for communications during an emergency. Additionally, GAWARN Member utilities can consider HAM radio as an optional backup radio system.

## 8.3 Communications on Wheels (COWs)

In the event of communications failures, local emergency management may arrange for COWs to provide temporary telecommunications services.

A statewide interoperability tool is available through the state to provide first responders with the ability to speak with each other during a disaster regardless of their differences in communications resources. The system is called the Voice Interoperability Plan for Emergency Responders (VIPER) and it works off a radio network available across the state.

*This Page Intentionally Left Blank*



## 9 After Action Report and Improvement Plan

### 9.1 After Action Report

After an exercise or an event, all GAWARN Members involved with mutual aid response are encouraged to meet and complete an After-action Report and consider creating an Improvement Plan. After action reviews and reports are typically carried out by GAWARN Member utilities that assisted in the GAWARN Response Team. The reviews and reports require input from all key players and groups involved in the response and recovery. Therefore, if the incident is small and only involves a small number of GAWARN Member utilities, then it may fall to the affected utility to carry out this step of the process. If the incident is large and involves many agencies and jurisdictions, the GAWARN Response Team Members may coordinate the after-action review and report process among all the participants. In this case, the GAWARN Chair or EOC representative should participate in the after-action review at the state level.

The designated Member utility will initiate a debriefing to discuss the overall activities and lessons learned. The debriefing reviews actions and activities from the response and recovery to the event. GAWARN Response Team Members can expect to provide a quick review of activities under their function and describe what went well for them, what did not work well, what steps can be taken to improve the situation, or other lessons learned. This meeting allows for open discussion of opportunities for improvement, actions taken, and the decisions they were based on, and potential future improvements.

The designated Member utility collects responses during this meeting and assembles them in an After-Action Report that briefly summarizes the actions taken during the response. The After-Action Report can include a brief description of the incident, the actions taken, and what needs to change in the future.

The following list of questions addresses key aspects of response. (The list is not all-inclusive.) In summary, the questions focus on what went well, what did not go well, what needs to be improved, or other lessons learned. The following questions are examples of what may be asked as part of an After-action Report:

- Notification
  - What was the number and frequency of notifications?
  - Did the number and frequency provide an accurate operational understanding of the emergency?
  - Were there gaps in notification?
- Activation
  - How did activation occur for utilities, GAWARN, and other stakeholders?
  - How quickly did “full” activation occur between stakeholders that responded?
  - How can the activation process be improved or streamlined?



## MUTUAL AID/ASSISTANCE OPERATIONAL PLAN

- Were the different departments (or jurisdictions and agencies) able to activate their plans and processes during this incident?
  - Coordination
    - Were Member utilities well-coordinated and matched to assignments according to skill?
    - What can be done in the future to maximize available resources?
    - What went well? Were the goals met?
    - What went wrong and what was done to correct it?
    - What can be improved?
    - Were resources interoperable?
    - Were the resources that were requested the same as the ones that were delivered?
    - Were databases used and are they interoperable across different workgroups and jurisdictions?
    - Were GIS coordinates available for use in response?
  - Mobilization
    - Was the information gathered from notifications sufficient to accurately organize and prepare for mobilization?
    - How quickly did “full” mobilization occur between stakeholders that responded?
  - Operational Support
    - What actually occurred at all levels of participation (timeline)?
    - What were the pre-event plans and processes for preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation?
    - Did the plans and processes meet the need of jurisdictions and agencies responding to this event?
    - How accurately were resource requests anticipated and fulfilled?
    - How can procedures for pre-staging resources, making and fulfilling resource requests, tracking and reporting on resource status, and recovering resources be improved?
    - How accurately were personnel requests anticipated and fulfilled?
    - What were some success stories?
    - What areas need improvement to facilitate response in the future?
  - Demobilization
    - Was a demobilization plan in place before the event? Was it followed?
    - What worked well?
    - What did not work well and were steps taken to address the situation?
    - What can be improved for the future and what options are available?
  - EOC Interface (local and/or State) [if applicable]
    - Was GAWARN an active participant in the EOC?
    - Were communications between GAWARN and the EOC effective?
    - Did the EOC understand utility priorities?
    - Can the interface between the EOC and GAWARN be improved?
  - Miscellaneous
- What are some other lessons learned not captured above?

## Improvement Plan

The After-action Report with the assessments and recommendations then serves as the basis for the Improvement Plan. An Improvement Plan includes the broad recommendations for improvements, the agreed-upon corrective actions, a timeline for making the changes, and an assignment of responsibilities to individuals or organizations. The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program provides information and guidance on conducting an After-action Review and Improvement Plan. Receiving and Responding Member Utilities may conduct internal AAR and Improvement Plans in addition to participation in the GAWARN AAR and IP if circumstances warrant that level of review and action.

Elements for an Improvement Plan should include:

- Measurable corrective actions
- Designated projected start date and completion date
- Corrective actions assigned to an organization and a point of contact within that organization
- Actions continually monitored and reviewed as part of an organizational Improvement Program

An individual can be elected or appointed to manage a Improvement Program to resolve corrective actions resulting from exercises, policy discussions and real-world events and support the scheduling and development of subsequent training and exercises.

*This Page Intentionally Left Blank*

## 10 Appendix, Forms and Checklists

Attached are supporting documents, checklists, and forms used in response to an emergency.

### 10.1 Appendices

[Appendix A – Mutual Aid and Assistance Responder Accommodations Checklist](#)

### 10.2 Forms

Form A: Emergency Notification and Request Form

Form B: GAWARN Responding Utility and Authorization Contact Form Form C:

ICS 214 Form – Event Log

Form D: GAWARN Activity Summary Sheet for SEOC Form E:

Cost Estimator Worksheet (GAEM)

Form F: Staging Area Manager Checklist

Form G: Daily Briefing Considerations (*Alternate ICS 204 Form*)

## Appendix B - Mutual Aid and Assistance Responder Accommodations Checklist

### Mutual Aid and Assistance Responders Accommodations Checklist

**Note:** It must be recognized by all parties involved that accommodations in emergency mutual aid and assistance situations are highly variable and subject to change. Information on this form is provided in good faith and is non-binding. Responders should be as prepared as possible for self-sufficiency and changes in conditions.

**Requestor Location/ Utility:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Incident:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

**Access**

Staging or reporting location: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommended route into area: \_\_\_\_\_

An escort from the requestor will be necessary in order for responders to clear access check-points and reach the requestor:

Yes      No

The requestor will be able to provide that escort:

Yes      No

Comments: .....

Special documentation or credentials will be required in order for the responders to clear access check-points: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Curfews are in place: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Most street signs are in place: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Requestor will be able to provide local maps: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

MUTUAL AID/ASSISTANCE OPERATIONAL PLAN

Requestor will be able to provide GPS coordinates: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Requestor will be able to provide GPS units: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

**Housing and Sanitation**

Nonna( hotel/ motel accommodations available:

Yes No

To be arranged by: Requestor \_\_\_ Utility name: \_\_\_  
Responder \_\_\_

To be paid for by: Requestor \_\_\_ Utility name: \_\_\_  
Responder \_

Approximate distance from work location: \_\_\_ miles

Comments:

Temporary shelter provided by requestor or other assisting agencies:

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Agency name: \_\_\_ -

Restrooms: Yes No

Portable toilets: Yes No

Showers: Yes No

Beds or cots: Yes No

Bedding provided: Yes No

Climate controlled: Yes No

Location: \_\_\_\_\_ -

Distance to staging area: \_\_\_\_\_

Distance to work location: \_\_\_\_\_ -

Comments:

Shelter (tents , campers, etc.) must be provided by responder:

Yes No

Location provided: Yes No

Hook-ups available: Water \_\_\_ Elect \_\_\_ Sewer \_

Sewer dump location available: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Restrooms: Yes No

Portable toilets: Yes No

Showers: Yes No

Portable generators pennined: Yes No

Gasoline \_\_\_ Diesel fuel \_\_\_ available for generators

Comments:

Sanitation facilities at work location:

Restrooms with running water nearby: Yes \_\_\_ No \_

Portable toilets: Yes No

Comments:

Expected temperature range (F): \_\_\_\_\_ Five-day weather forecast: \_\_\_\_\_

Long-range forecast: \_\_\_\_\_ -

Other housing and sanitation comments:



## MUTUAL AID/ASSISTANCE OPERATIONAL PLAN

### Employee Safety (cont.):

Current inoculations required of responders:

Tetanus  
HepA \_  
HepB \_  
Others: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Basic PPE always required of all responders•

Basic PPE: hard hat, safety vest, safety shoes, appropriate boots,  
appropriate gloves, raingear and eye and ear protection as needed  
Chain saw operator PPE: add chaps

Special PPE recommended or required: \_\_\_\_\_

Other potential exposures or conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

Animal or insect hazards or nuisances present: \_\_\_\_\_

Injury reporting procedure: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments:

Psychological conditions anticipated:

Routine storm damage \_  
Significant damage to properties \_  
Significant loss of livestock \_  
Significant loss of companion animals \_  
Significant loss of life and/or human suffering \_  
Finding of human corpses possible \_ probable \_  
Psychological counseling provided: Yes No  
Comments:

### Communications:

Voice Communications:

Normal telephone service available: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
Phones available: \_\_\_ Pay phones available: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
Cell phones operable: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Limited coverage \_\_\_  
Satellite telephones provided: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
Requestor will be able to provide responder teams with one two-way radio per  
team: Yes No  
Radio frequency used: \_\_\_ - \_\_\_  
Comments:

Data Communications:

Wired or wireless high-speed Internet access available: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
Dial-up Internet access available: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

## MUTUAL AID/ASSISTANCE OPERATIONAL PLAN

### Vehicular and Equipment Needs:

Requestors will provide or ensure availability of vehicle diesel fuel and gasoline

Utility name: \_\_\_\_ -

Available for purchase \_

Responders must bring own diesel fuel \_\_ and gasoline \_\_

In disasters involving structural debris on roadways:

Requestors will provide or ensure availability of tire repair services:

Yes No

Utility name: \_\_\_\_ -

Commercially available at charge .

Responders must bring own tire repair capabilities: Yes \_\_ No \_\_

Chain saw parts and repair services available: Yes No

Provided by (agency name): \_\_\_\_ -

Commercially available at charge: Yes No

Must be provided by responders: Yes No

Comments:

Vehicle and heavy equipment services

Provided by requestor: Yes \_\_ No \_

Commercially available: Yes \_\_ No \_\_\_\_

Responders must bring own vehicle and heavy equipment repair capabilities: \_

Local businesses of relevance to responders that are not open:

### Other Responders' Needs

Financial:

Banks open: Yes No

Bank teller machines operational: Yes No

Credit cards OK at most business establishments: Yes No

Responders purchase orders likely accepted: Yes No

Travelers' checks accepted: Yes No

Cash required: Yes \_\_ NO\_\_\_\_ Suggested amount: \_

Notable cash-related security issues, if any: \_\_\_\_\_ \_

Coins needed for laundry machines, vending machines, etc. Yes \_\_ No \_

Comments:



**Other Responders• Needs (cont.)**

Laundry services available: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
Provided by requestor \_\_\_ Coin laundry services available \_  
Comments:

Other comments:

**Form Completed By:**      **Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Title/ Role:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Agency:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_