10 STEPS
Ten Steps to Maintain Critical Wastewater Services and Protect Public Health in an Emergency
Have you taken these Ten Steps to Maintain Critical Wastewater Services and Protect Public Health in an Emergency?

**Step 1:** Make an emergency contact list that includes all essential contacts.
- Post by each telephone and distribute to all staff
- Review and update the list quarterly, and as changes occur
- Include contacts needed to inform your community of emergencies

**Step 2:** Inspect your facilities daily.
- Inspect treatment facilities (e.g., lift/pump stations, outfalls, chemical storage areas, fences, etc.)
- Use a security checklist to log results
- Take immediate action to address vulnerabilities

**Step 3:** Make security and preparedness everyone’s job.
- Leaders must set a good example toward security
- Make all staff accountable for their security actions
- Report problems immediately
- Implement a plan to communicate regularly with employees, emergency responders, and customers about security issues
- Have plans to increase security when risks are elevated

**Step 4:** Limit and control access to facilities.
- Routinely lock all doors and gates
- Remove keys and lock vehicles
- Limit key access to essential personnel
- Keep track of who has keys

**Step 5:** Establish relationships with emergency personnel and neighboring facilities.
- Involve emergency personnel in your emergency planning (e.g., fire, police, hospitals, etc.)
- Establish mutual aid agreements with neighboring facilities, as appropriate
- Familiarize emergency personnel with all aspects and vulnerabilities of your system
Practice safe chemical handling and usage.
- Control chemical deliveries and be aware of delivery dates
- Store chemicals safely and securely
- Dispose of chemicals properly

Secure your records and maps.
- Update and organize critical information
- Control access to records and maps
- Backup computer files regularly
- Install updated virus protection and firewall on computers
- Secure deeds, titles, reports, etc. with copies or protection from fire and water damage

Assess threats and identify vulnerabilities.
- Prioritize key threats and vulnerabilities
- Harden facilities that are vulnerable to security threats and natural disasters
- Take appropriate steps to prevent, detect, delay, and deter intruders
- Consider security and emergency preparedness when making system changes
- Review security priorities annually

Have an emergency response plan for your wastewater system.
- Know key steps to take in an emergency
- Identify sources of backup equipment and assistance
- Train staff on the plan, and test it with emergency personnel and neighboring facilities
- Practice, practice, practice
- Update the plan annually

Educate staff, elected officials, and community members about how they can protect their wastewater system.
- Do not place hazardous material or objects in collection systems
- Report suspicious behavior and vandalism immediately
- Recognize and report abnormal situations
- Use neighborhood watch programs to help protect collection systems and other wastewater assets

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) encourages all wastewater systems to conduct a vulnerability assessment and take appropriate steps to improve security and emergency preparedness. Carrying out these ten steps is a good start.

More information about improving security and emergency preparedness is available on EPA’s website, www.epa.gov/safewater/, or by calling the National Environmental Services Center at 1-800-624-8301.
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