

Mutual Aid for Water and Wastewater Utilities MDWARN Wants You

Are you aware that Maryland is forming a statewide mutual aid response and assistance network? Nationally the American Water Works in cooperation with the USEPA is encouraging all states to develop such a mutual aid program specific to the water and wastewater industry. Go to <http://www.awwa.org/government/content.cfm?ItemNumber=30229> for more information. *The Maryland Water/Wastewater/Public Works Agency Response Network*, known as **MDWARN**, is being created to provide a statewide network to allow water and wastewater utilities from one community to help water and/or wastewater utilities in another community with personnel and resources following natural and manmade disasters. This network will extend across the entire state allowing any participating Maryland utility to receive aid or respond to a disaster in any other Maryland community. Additionally this program will set up a formal process to share needed resources as the need may arise. Do you want to become a part of this network? We aren't quite ready to start signing up members because we are still finishing the mutual aid agreement. At this time, we want to find out who is interested in joining **MDWARN**. (About 21 utilities have already expressed an interest to date.) You can join in a number of different ways, which will be explained later, just fill out the following form to let us know you are interested.

This is not a commitment to join. The commitment, if you decide to pursue membership, will occur when your governing board or council adopts a resolution to officially join. For now, we are just trying to develop a preliminary list of those interested. The establishment of a mutual assistance agreement network of Maryland water and wastewater agencies will help ensure that necessary local community services remain operational following a disaster. Using **MDWARN**, a utility is able to directly contact other utilities to get the needed assistance on its way immediately. There are no administrative delays, no bureaucratic obstacles, and no red tape. The process is simple. A utility requesting assistance will simply go to the **MDWARN** website, choose from a pre-existing inventory of available resources and then call or email the communities having those resources. The contacted utility will then determine if it can respond. (No **MDWARN** member is required to respond.) Not only is there a quick response, but the local utility stays in charge and gets what it asks for.

MDWARN is not a government entity. Some of the benefits of joining MDWARN:

- MDWARN will use a single statewide mutual aid agreement which will help reduce administrative conflict over such things as: insurance, workers compensation, equipment rental rates, and other cost-related issues.
- The statewide agreement does not conflict or supersede existing mutual aid agreements; rather, it complements them by providing a utility with a variety of response options.
- There is no cost to join or annual cost to belong to MDWARN.
- There is no commitment or obligation to respond if your utility receives a request.
- It allows the local utility to remain in control of all response activities.
- Specialized operations, such as water and wastewater utilities, are assisted by other specialized operations until the disaster is over or other aid is provided by the state or federal governments.
- You can use MDWARN simply for finding parts or equipment to make repairs; there doesn't have to be a full-scale emergency.
- MDWARN will be a very good thing for all of Maryland, so complete the following interest form and be ready to get on board.

MDWARN Interest Form

Community/Utility

Respondent Name

Title _____

Email Address _____

Phone _____ *Fax* _____

Mailing Address _____

Street _____

City _____

County _____

State _____ *Zip* _____

Population Served _____

Please indicate if you represent the following (check all that apply):
Water Utility _____ Wastewater Utility _____ Other _____/specify:

Please email or fax this information:
Stephen C. Gerwin, PE
Howard County Bureau of Utilities
8250 Old Montgomery Road
Columbia, MD 21045

Phone 410-313-4912
Fax 410-313-4919
Email SGerwin@howardcountymd.gov