Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response in the Nation’s Capital

Presentation for:
VWEA 2016 Education Seminar
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Agenda

- What is our program trying to achieve
- Emergency Preparedness & Response to emergencies
- Lessons Learned and After Actions
- The future at DC Water

Rhode Island Avenue, NE next to the Metro Station
What is an Emergency

- Any condition that:
  - Could or has resulted in serious personnel injury or death
  - Poses an environmental or health threat *(probable legal or regulatory violation)* to the general public
  - Could cause substantial damage to DC Water’s infrastructure or operations
Goals of Emergency Plan

- **Standardize approach**
  - Planning, mitigation, assessment (threat levels), response, recovery

- **Protection**
  - Personnel, emergency responders, community, environment, operations

- **Minimize damage**

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DC Water Emergency Plans

- **Vulnerability / Risk Assessments**
  - District Response Plan
    - Field Guides (under development)
    - Continuity of Operations Plan
    - Business Recovery Plan (under development)
  - All Hazards Initial Response Plan (to be incorporated into EMPP)
  - Incident-Specific Plans
    - Incident-Specific Procedures (Natural/Structural/Accident/Fire/Explosion/Medical/Hazardous Materials/Disasters/Civil Disruption)
  - Site-Specific Plans
    - IT Plans (managed by IT)
    - Security Plans (managed by Security)
EMP Components

- Pre-Emergency Planning
  - Vulnerability and risk assessments
  - Threat level designations
  - Roles and responsibilities
  - Training

- Incident Response General Procedures
  - General procedures
  - Alerts
  - Notification
  - Communication
  - Evacuation
  - Mitigation

- Incident-Specific Response Procedures
  - Weather, accident/structural, medical/injury, fire/explosion/bomb, hazmat, biological, disruption, terrorism, etc.

- Post-Incident Procedures
  - Continuity of operations (COOP)
  - Recovery and site restoration
  - Incident investigation, evaluation, corrective and preventive action

Steps to “Using It”

1. Gap analysis
   - Dusty old plans
   - Recent events
   - Industry and government standards
   - Experience – inside and outside

2. Risk and vulnerability assessment
   - Identify priorities
   - Focus on continual improvement (no need to be perfect)

3. Engage collaborating agencies, staff, and experts
   - Use available knowledge base
   - Work/train closely with responders, area agencies, neighbors, hospitals, etc.

4. Organize plan for sustainability
   - Easy to update and access
   - Base plan – year-long shelf life
   - Mutually sections – in appendices or separate documents (contacts, lists, etc.)
   - Meet standards for document management (ensure complete, current, authorized version)
Steps to “Using It”

4. Address key areas
   • Scope
   • Planning, including R&R
   • Prevention
   • Response
   • Corrective and preventive action

5. Develop interim plan and training early
   • Don’t wait for final plan
   • Begin training and drills immediately – internal and external
   • Create and distribute quick-references

6. Establish continual improvement process
   • Update with lessons learned
   • New industry knowledge and standards
   • Migrate to better accessibility (web-based versions)
   • Create field guides

Keys to Usability

- Clarify scope
  • Processes, procedures, facilities, activities, areas of service

- Conduct risk analysis
  • Sandia National Lab: http://www.sandia.gov/ram/
  • Hazard analysis: potential incidents (weather, accident, hazmat, terrorism, etc.)

- Train incident management team

- Test common language
  • Emergency vs. incident, alert levels, ECC vs. EOC, titles, weather terms, etc.

- Make it accessible and easy to reference
Emergency Preparedness

- Mandatory ICS training for all managers and supervisors (Including senior staff)
- Communications to all stakeholders
- Regular planned conference calls

Emergency Preparedness...

- Distribute all pre-planning and response documents to Managers and supervisors
- Start using and distributing Incident Command System documents
- Activate the DC Water Incident Management Team
- Commenced and ended the response with the planning P
Emergency Response - Challenges

- Accurate information for planning the response
- What would roles be during the response
- Maintaining the rage…

Emergency Response – Lessons Learned

- What DC Water needed and didn’t have:
  - More accurate/localized flood and tide data to make accurate preventative predictions (Not a criticism of NWS)
  - Ability to reach out to our utility partners in other states
  - A better understanding of community expectations
  - Accurate mapping that can be used internally as well as shared externally
  - Better methods of tracking field staff real time
  - Sampling support during contamination events
Emergency Response – Lessons Learned

- DC Water areas to improve on:
  - Severe weather is the new normal
  - Planning is more expensive
  - Identifying the critical staffing roles and assignments
  - Communicating up, down, in, and out
  - Distributing documents to all field staff
  - Alternate training for IMT

Q & A

Emergency Management and Crisis Response at DC Water

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