



City of Tacoma

Questions and Answers

Emergency Water Distribution Assessment RFP Specification No. TW24-0106F

All interested parties had the opportunity to submit questions in writing by email to Brandon Snow, Senior Buyer by date questions were due. The answers to the questions received are provided below and posted to the City's website at www.TacomaPurchasing.org. Navigate to [Current Contracting Opportunities / Services Solicitations](#), and then click *Questions and Answers* for this Specification. This information IS NOT considered an addendum. Respondents should consider this information when submitting their proposals.

1. Question: Has the Water Forum already reviewed emergency response plans you like or is planning starting from scratch?

Answer: The Forum has not reviewed other agencies' emergency response plans with respect to drinking water distribution.

2. Question: There are two different values for the budget on this, \$25,000 and \$35,000. Which is the correct budget limit?

Answer: \$25,000 is the estimated cost of this contract.

3. Question: Do you know if any of your member utilities have "public distribution locations" planned? E.g., a place the Army National Guard, etc. can fill from and then go out to the communities for "self-fill" type stations?

Answer: We have not asked the Forum members about planned public distribution locations. It is possible that some of them have such plans, but we are not aware of any that are in place.

4. Question: The RFP mentions a half-day workshop that took place in June of 2023. Are you able to share any results or reports from that workshop?

Answer: Attached are the agenda and notes from the Forum's June 2023 Workshop.

5. Question: Are you able to share which consultant facilitated that workshop?

Answer: Perteet Inc. helped design and facilitated the Forum's June 2023 workshop.

6. Question: Does the 10-page, double-sided limit equate to 20 single-sided pages?

Answer: A "page" is defined as one single-side of a document. The 10-page limit excludes any required forms, resumes, or cover page.



Emergency Management Workshop Agenda

Residence Inn – 605 114th Ave. SE, Bellevue 98004

8:30AM – 1:00PM, June 20, 2023

Invitees: Water Supply Forum, local and state emergency management offices, local health departments, DOH, local fire departments, American Red Cross, Homeland Security, FEMA, WAWARN, NW Healthcare Response Network

Workshop Purposes:

- Reintroduce the Water Supply Forum’s vision, mission, and objectives
- Discuss cross-functional coordination of roles and responsibilities between various agencies in preparation for and in response to a major emergency, with a focus on drinking water
- Identify gaps in the regional response
- Build the foundation for a future Water Supply Forum emergency response tabletop exercise

8:30am **“Meet and Greet”** [coffee and breakfast items provided]

9:00am **Welcome, Workshop Purposes and Agenda**

9:10am **Self-Introductions**

9:20am **Water Supply Forum Overview**

9:30am **Overview of Water Utilities’ Roles and Priorities During a Major Earthquake**

9:50am **Facilitated Roundtable Discussion**

- 1) For non-water utilities, what are your expectations of drinking water utilities to enable your organization to effectively prepare for and respond to a major earthquake? [10-minute break between Questions 1 and 2]
- 2) For non-water utilities, based on what you heard from the water utilities, how can or should your organization help water utilities effectively prepare for and respond to a major earthquake?

12:00pm **Facilitated Discussion** [lunch provided]

For all participants, based on responses from the roundtable discussions, what gaps and next steps are needed for improved regional coordination and response?

12:25pm **Partner Agencies Presentations** – WAWARN and WA Emergency Management Division

12:55pm **Recap and Next Steps**

1:00pm **Adjourn**

WATER SUPPLY FORUM NOTES

June 20, 2023

Question #1 – For non-water utilities, what are your expectations of drinking water utilities to enable your organization to effectively prepare for and respond to a major earthquake?

Emergency Management:

- What are legal/contractual mutual aid considerations and obligations for neighbors?
- What are the obligations upstream of a break?
- What does 80/20 gravity feed mean?
- What can residents/businesses do to support the water supply (fill bathtub, etc.)? How can this practical information be communicated?
- What are water prioritization plans (hospitals, fires, etc.)? How do they rank?
- How can Emergency Management provide technical expertise, like communicating how to make potable water? They need the technical information about the situation to communicate accurate information.
- Need to know information, such as: if slides are expected; if water main breaks; can you divert water?
- What can they plan for and stockpile?
- If water utilities can't do certain things until a disaster is declared, how does that hinder them?
- After an earthquake, buildings may need to be assessed for damage prior to entering. All agencies should have someone on staff who is qualified to perform an assessment of structure because finding someone who is qualified to perform the assessment will be difficult after an earthquake.

Public Health:

- They need status report updates; what's working and what's not working?
- What messaging needs to be sent to the public for them to be safe? For example, what are the risks and how do they mitigate the risk?
- Need to coordinate communications between customers, utilities, residents, state, etc. Who does Public Health need to talk with to coordinate on those messages? How does Public Health plug into the Incident Command Structure (ICS)?
- How does a damaged water system affect the wastewater system (e.g., concern about disease)?
- How are different types of water needs impacted (e.g., drinking water vs dialysis)?

State and Federal Agencies:

- Need coordination between resource requests. Would like to understand what resources will be needed prior to the disaster. Prioritize resources in advance.
- How can they help with damage assessment? Need more asset assessors (need to get more people qualified in house as others will be booked).

Water Utilities Responses:

- Utilities don't always know to volunteer the information until it's asked.
- Some redundancy has been built in from loop system on transmission mains, but there are weak points that the water utility knows about. This affects prioritization, depending if water is available in certain areas.
- Utilities have plans to keep reservoirs available for fire-fighting and potable water. In Seattle, most reservoirs are seismically hardened.
- Triage based on the break.
- Utilities try to coordinate but often depend on themselves.
- Utilities have noticed that during small/medium incidents, the amount of information that other agencies need goes way up. The consolidation of that information needs to happen in the Emergency Operations Centers (EOCs).
- A lot of technical needs go up. Resource coordination is a huge deal. The utilities may be able to bring in technical support personnel but need help with food and lodging for those people. This can be supported in the EOCs.
- Need to increase use of EOC/ICS to support coordination and policy determination.

Question #2 – For non-water utilities, based on what you heard from the water utilities' earlier discussion, how can or should your organization help water utilities effectively prepare for and respond to a major earthquake?

For water utilities, is there anything else you need from other sectors to help you effectively prepare for and respond to a major earthquake, and what can you do to help other agencies?

Emergency Management:

- Find people to train in the Applied Technology Council's ATC-20 Rapid Assessment procedures. Most trained ATC-20 responders will be tied up in other roles.
- How can they help plan for the influx of people coming in to help? How to provide food and lodging for contractors and business coming to help?
- Staffing issues: how to prevent loss of staff after incident?
- EOC responders: how to ensure people are as effective and useful in situations when they cannot make it to their own EOC but are near another EOC? How to cross-train EOC staff?
- How is communication with residents being planned for?
- Try to better understand neighboring jurisdictions; knowing what resources are available to lead planning and support mitigation.
- What type of grant funding is being discussed and is available?

Public Health:

- Making connections is important to agencies.
- Communication and developing messaging; who are messages being sent out to; how are they being sent?
- ICS: knowing their role is important and practicing communication.

- Questions from public; knowing who to send questions from the public to who knows the answers would really help.
- Department of Health (DOH) and public health are representatives of the health messaging. Need to coordinate.
- COVID lessons: everyone will see the experience in their own lens, and science may not convince people to do something. People may not follow messaging. Even with the best science, people might not be prepared to do the right thing.

State and Federal Agencies:

- They would focus on providing decision-making support tools to help show criticalities and connection between agencies. Need questions to get to the right agency.
- There is training available on how to do mission assignments. Training requests must go through the agency's Emergency Manager.
- Try to know one another better and understand what resources are available.

Emergency Management:

- Resource availability: should assume there will be no resources available.
- When making a resource request, it's important to communicate the importance of the resource, e.g., a generator will restore water to XXX number of residents. What will a back hoe get us? What will a pumping station get us? Is the resource request life sustaining? This additional information will help with prioritization.
- Utilities need to provide clear information to support prioritization and incident planning. Providing clear information will help with good decision making.

Water Utilities:

- Support agencies need to understand the structure, how ICS will be stood up, what are the different layers, how to get resource requests in, how to report up, etc.
- Support agencies need to have a better understanding of operations at their local EOC during a major incident. How are resource requests decisions made? Knowing the structure will be really important down to the org chart level. More teamwork and working with those people to prepare for an incident.
- Communication is important. Chlorine shortage taught lessons about messaging; will need to make sure the messaging is consistent and up to date.
- Need to let others know what priorities are being addressed.
- Find pinch points or areas of conflict and work through them.
- Security of assets: during a shortage there will be risk and assets will need protection from vandalism. People get desperate. Water, fuel and other resources that will be in demand.
- Utilities need to do an inventory of projected needs and know what resources are available.
- At agency level, how will resource requests be handled? Would like more practice and communication at the local level.
- Use SMART format in resource requests (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound).

What would help you respond to a future event? What would you like to be doing that you aren't doing now?

Water Utilities:

- Better job of knowing the population and identifying vulnerable populations to support response. Examples: demographics, language, physical abilities. Will help utilities deliver resources where they are most needed and is most equitable. Small utilities need help with this.
- Understand where Community Points of Distribution (CPOD) will be located and how the utilities will be expected to support them. Will they be required to distribute water there? How to support critical facilities and how to get water there?
- Should have pre-planned messaging library that can be customized and accessible.
- Knowing priorities of other agency infrastructure that is required to serve water infrastructure (like state bridges that are required to access transmission mains).
- Water utilities will be focused on pipes, not bottled water.

Public Health:

- Social vulnerability index can help an agency identify where vulnerable populations are located.

Emergency Management:

- Bottled water discussion is critical to support response. Discuss who should be responsible in advance. Work on advanced planning where the demand might be the greatest. Emergency Management Division (EMD)/State will not be responsible; water is heavy and hard to transport.
- Public Information Officers (PIOs) are not subject matter experts and should work together to pre-plan messaging, automate messaging, including regional messaging prep. Will help to manage misinformation.
- Should also assume that there will not be a communication structure. Resource requests may be difficult to send.
- There will be islands of people who are cut off that should be planned for.
- Red Cross is concerned about a lack of usable information. They need information like maps that shows areas that are affected. Other agencies need to be transparent and use clear language that the public can understand: timelines, milestones, maps. This will also help with prioritization and decision making by elected officials. Other agencies need to engage across lines and use a holistic approach.
- State does not intend to provide bottled water. Will engage coastal communities before the I-5 corridor.

What gaps and next steps are needed for improved regional coordination and response?

- Identify alternatives to bottled waters, e.g., filters and how to provide
- Communication
 - Pre-prepared messaging that is consistent across region
 - Resource needs
 - Roles and responsibilities



- Concept of Operations
 - Incident Command Structure
 - Damage assessments
 - Understanding federal response priorities
 - Understanding other agencies' priorities
- Re-entry framework
 - Resources to respond
- Relationship building
 - Contact lists
 - Invite public health departments to participate in exercises
- Unified credential structure
 - Ensure consistent qualifications
 - Ensure staff has access to areas they need to get to
 - MOUs – staff can support other utilities when they can't access their own
- Employee personal preparedness
 - Home kits for staff to ensure they are prepared in an emergency
 - Website and information
 - Continuation of Operations Plan (COOP) discussions
- Resource, information, and data gaps
 - Vulnerable population maps
 - Training and planning, where to get the help
 - Hard to find local training resources
 - Basic staff training – duty to report
 - ICS training
 - How to be prepared at home and work