



# 10 STEPS

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

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## 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 6

### Practice safe chemical handling and usage.

- Control chemical deliveries and be aware of delivery dates
- Store chemicals safely and securely
- Dispose of chemicals properly

## 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 7

### 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

## 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 8

### 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

## 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 9

### 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

## 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

## STEP 10

### 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/](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/), or by calling the National Environmental Services Center at 1-800-624-8301.

Additional cards available from the National Environmental Services Center. 1-800-624-8301

#### Ten Step Pocket Card

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9. Have an emergency response plan.
10. Teach the community to protect their wastewater system.

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