



Request for City Council Committee Action From the Department of Public Works

Date: May 20, 2008

To: Honorable Sandra Colvin Roy, Chair Transportation & Public Works Committee

Subject: **Approval of Joining Minnesota Water Agency Response Network (MnWARN) Mutual Aid Agreement**

Recommendation:

That the City Council approve the attached Minnesota Water Agency Response Network (MnWARN) Mutual Aid Agreement, and authorize the proper City officials to execute the agreement. In addition, that the City Council designate the City Engineer/ Director of Public Works or his/her designee as the "Authorized Official," as defined in the Agreement, who requests or provides assistance under this Agreement.

Previous Directives:

None

Prepared by: Shahin Rezaia, P.E., Director, Water Treatment and Distribution Services, x2418

Approved by:

Steven A. Kotke, P.E., City Engineer, Director of Public Works

Presenters: Shahin Rezaia, P.E., Director, Water Treatment and Distribution Services

Reviews

Permanent Review Committee (PRC):	Approval	NA	Date
Civil Rights Affirmative Action Plan	Approval	NA	Date
Policy Review Group (PRG):	Approval	NA	Date

Financial Impact (Check those that apply)

- No financial impact - or - Action is within current department budget (If checked, go directly to Background/Supporting Information)
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the Capital Budget
- Action requires an appropriation increase to the Operating Budget
- Action provides increased revenue for appropriation increase
- Action requires use of contingency or reserves
- Business Plan: Action is within the plan. Action requires a change to plan.
- Other financial impact (Explain):
- Request provided to department's Finance Dept. contact when provided to the Committee Coordinator

Community Impact

Neighborhood Notification: Not Applicable

City Goals: A SAFE PLACE TO CALL HOME: the city's infrastructure will be well-maintained, people will feel safe in the city.

Comprehensive Plan: Not Applicable

Zoning Code: Not Applicable

Background/Supporting Information

Events such as 9/11, the 1994 Northridge earthquake, the 1997 Red River flood, and more recently Hurricanes Katrina and Rita underscored a need for water and wastewater utilities to create intrastate mutual aid and assistance programs. Mutual aid is important to the water sector for many reasons:

- Utilities require specialized resources to sustain operations.
- Government response agencies and other critical infrastructure rely on water supplies, and utilities must provide their own support until state and federal resources are available.
- Large events impact regional areas can make response from nearby utilities impractical.
- Promoting mutual aid/assistance meets FY07 Department of Homeland Security requirements.

The Minnesota Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (MnWARN) is a new statewide mutual aid system. MnWARN is modeled after similar programs developed in Florida, California, and Texas and is geared specifically to utilities. It recognizes that utilities are highly specialized and must be self-sufficient to fill the gap until help from larger agencies arrives. Through this mutual aid system, utilities can help each other with personal resources during natural and man-made emergencies, ranging from broken water mains or loss of power to large-scale disasters.

The main components of the WARN system are:

1. A steering committee composed of a cross-section of our state's water and wastewater industry.
2. A mutual aid agreement that provides clear legal and procedural framework for aid to occur.
3. Regional divisions providing a "neighbor-helping-neighbor" environment.
4. A website, where critical contact information is stored for viewing.

Volunteers from utilities serve in six regions of the state sharing boundaries with Homeland Security Emergency Management (HSEM), streamlining emergency response efforts. Advisory support is provided by the Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, League of Minnesota Cities, Minnesota Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Association of Minnesota Emergency Managers, and the Minnesota Municipal Utilities Association. MnWARN is broadly supported by various first responder State Agencies, whose representatives serve in a support capacity. Linking the utility members is a common website that provides both information and logistical support during emergencies, MnWARN.org.

MnWARN became operational in February of 2008. Five communities (City of Elbow Lake, City of Hawley, City of Rushford, City of St. Peter, and City of Trimont) have signed the MnWARN mutual aid agreement so far.

Attachments: Minnesota Water Agency Response Network (MnWARN) Mutual Aid Agreement

Cc: Rocco Forte
Robin Hennessy