



Oklahoma Association of Regional Councils of Government



Oklahoma Municipal League



Oklahoma Water Environment Association

SoonerWARN Partners

SoonerWARN is made up of Water and Wastewater Utilities across Oklahoma, assisted by regulatory and technical agencies. The SoonerWARN Steering Committee represents:
Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality
Oklahoma Office of Emergency Management
Oklahoma Municipal League
Oklahoma Water Environment Association
Oklahoma Rural Water Association
Oklahoma Association of Regional Councils of Government

SoonerWARN Benefits

The goal of SoonerWARN is to provide services to member utilities and encourage more participation from utilities across the state.

SoonerWARN assists its members with the following issues:

- Recovery coordination
- Resource inventory and availability status
- Information exchange
- Vulnerability assessment tools
- Preparation protocols
- Emergency Response Plan updates and checklists
- Updated best management practices reference library
- Up-to-date status reports
- Pertinent legislation briefings

For Additional Information Contact:

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To Become a Member Go To:

www.soonerwarn.org

and click on membership application to get started!

Visit www.soonerwarn.org to become a member

SoonerWARN

Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality
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Oklahoma City, OK 73101-1677

What is SoonerWARN?

Oklahoma's Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (SoonerWARN) is the formalized system of "utilities helping utilities" with mutual aid during emergency situations. The project is designed to reduce bureaucratic red tape in times of emergency. The goal of SoonerWARN is to provide immediate relief for member utilities during times of emergencies. The purpose is to get personnel with the necessary tools and equipment that can both assess and assist the impacted water and wastewater system as quickly as possible by whatever means necessary until such time that a permanent solution to the devastation may be implemented. SoonerWARN will provide a network of "utilities helping utilities" as the best method for responding to the immediate water and wastewater damage caused by natural disasters. By combining a mutual aid network with security information collaborative, SoonerWARN will cover all aspects of both natural and man-made emergency assistance.

Is Mutual Aid established under Oklahoma law?

The Oklahoma Mutual Aid Law (MAL) establishes a statewide mutual aid agreement between local jurisdictions, thereby eliminating the need for written mutual agreements. To fully utilize the MAL, an emergency should be declared by an incorporated or legal jurisdiction. This may be done at the discretion of the jurisdiction when available resources are not sufficient to meet an imminent need. All mutual aid is provided at the discretion of the providing jurisdiction. It should be noted that jurisdictions retain the option of providing mutual aid on a case by case basis. Private utilities are not included in the Oklahoma MAL, however those utilities are encouraged to join SoonerWarn. The SoonerWarn Steering Committee has provided a mutual aid agreement for private utilities which will help promote 'utilities helping utilities' in time of emergency. The mutual aid agreement may also be used by jurisdictions in lieu of declaring an emergency to activate the MAL.

How did SoonerWARN get started?

Oklahoma is vulnerable to a variety of natural and man-made hazards that threaten the safety and well being of our communities, businesses and the environment. The formation of SoonerWARN is driven by a nation wide preparedness initiative based on natural and human caused emergencies and awareness that utility operations are specialized. They must be self-sufficient to fill the gap between

when a disaster happens and the arrival of government aid. The initial WARN systems were developed in Florida, Texas, and Louisiana where hurricanes were the trigger for the development of the program. Concerns of public water utilities along with preparedness planning within EPA and FEMA determined every state can utilize and benefit from a WARN system since disasters can occur anywhere.

How is SoonerWARN funded?

DEQ funds SoonerWARN using a portion from their EPA Water Protection Grant.

What is the organizational structure?

A steering committee provides leadership for SoonerWARN. It is composed of representatives of state water/wastewater professional organizations.

How does SoonerWARN work during an emergency?

When there is advance knowledge of an event, the steering committee will begin pre-planning three to four days out. As a disaster develops, utilities out of the path of impact gear up to help the affected areas.

Member utilities are able to request assistance through the SoonerWARN web site. Since electricity is often out during an emergency, SoonerWARN administrators and steering committee members attempt to contact, using emergency contact information, all members in the area of the storm

to determine their needs. Administrators may then post any needs to the web page. This is an innovative process because it allows member utilities to match their available resources to requests for assistance. SoonerWARN is designed to get the correct resources to the appropriate location within the first days after an event.

SoonerWARN is designed to gear up without any notice using the web page and personal contact to respond to any man-made emergencies or other disasters.

