

The Technical Assistance Times

Resource: EPA’s Water Utility COVID-19 Financial Impact Tool

EPA’s Water Utility COVID-19 Financial Impact Tool can help drinking water, wastewater, and stormwater (“water”) utilities assess the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the utility’s cashflow.

This tool leads water utilities through questions that can determine how their revenues, expenses, and cashflow have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. The spreadsheet automatically calculates the changes for a utility’s revenues and expenses by looking at current 2020 monthly financials versus the average monthly financials of the utility’s 2019 audited financial statement. Water utilities can use the tool each month to keep a running total of their cashflow.

Use of the spreadsheet is voluntary and its results are provided for your information only. EPA is not collecting either the data entered by utilities nor the results. EPA is planning to send a separate survey to randomly selected utilities at another time. **The tool contains the following questions, such as:**

Revenue Questions: *Have commercial/industrial revenues been impacted? Have residential revenues been impacted? Do you sell wholesale water/wastewater treatment? Do you charge connection/tap fees? Are you suspending late fees? Are you suspending shutoffs? And more.*

Expense Questions: *Have your labor costs, regular and overtime, changed? Do you purchase water for resale? Do you pay another system to treat your wholesale wastewater? Have your chemical usages changed? Have your disposal costs changed? Have your testing expenses changed? Has there been a change in the system's energy bill? And more.*

Cash Flow Questions: *Has there been, or do you expect, a change in Accounts receivable? Has there been, or do you expect, a change in Accounts payable? Will you delay pension fund contributions? Are there inter-agency funds transfers that have occurred, or that will occur? Has there been, or do you expect, a change in the system's rate structure such as a delay in implementing a rate increase or temporary rate reductions? And more.*

Access the Tool at: www.epa.gov/waterfinancecenter/financial-technical-assistance-and-tools-water-infrastructure#tools



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MRWA Training Opportunities

Check out www.mrwa.com

Training Calendar link to check for upcoming MRWA in-person and online training opportunities.



AWIA: America Water Infrastructure Act of 2018



Section 2013 of America's Water Infrastructure Act of 2018 (AWIA) requires community water systems that serve more than 3,300 people to complete a risk and resilience assessment and develop an emergency response plan.

Important Deadline dates: June 30, 2021 - if serving 3,301 to 49,999 for submitting certification of Risk and Resiliency Assessment and December 30, 2021 if serving 3,301 to 49,999 for submitting certification of Emergency Response Plan.

Risk and Resilience Assessment Checklist for Small Systems - www.mrwa.com/awiaresources.html

This guidance is intended for small community water systems (CWS's) serving greater than 3,300 but less than 50,000 people. Community water systems serving less than 3,300 people are not required to conduct risk and resilience assessments under AWIA, however, it is recommended that these systems use this, or other guidance, to learn how to conduct risk and resilience assessments and address threats from malevolent acts and natural hazards that threaten safe drinking water.

EPA Tools and Resources:

EPA AWIA Main Page:

<https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/americas-water-infrastructure-act-risk-assessments-and-emergency-response-plans>

AWIA Factsheet – This document provides an overview of the new requirements, deadlines, frequently asked questions and information concerning resources and tools. Access at <https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/overview-new-risk-assessment-and-emergency-response-plan-requirements-community>

Baseline Information on Malevolent Acts for Community Water Systems (CWSs) - This document provides baseline information on malevolent act threat categories and corresponding threat likelihoods relevant to drinking water and wastewater systems. Access at <https://www.epa.gov/waterriskassessment/baseline-information-malevolent-acts-community-water-systems>

Vulnerability Self-Assessment Tool Web 2.0 – This updated version of the Vulnerability Self-Assessment Tool assists drinking water and wastewater systems in conducting an AWIA-compliant Risk and Resilience Assessment. Access at <https://www.epa.gov/waterriskassessment/conduct-drinking-water-or-wastewater-utility-risk-assessment>

Emergency Response Plan Template and Instructions – This updated emergency response plan guidance provides a template and instructions for drinking water systems to develop or revise an AWIA-compliant Emergency Response Plan. https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2019-07/documents/190712-awia_erp_template_instructions_kab_508c_v6.pdf

Small System Risk and Resilience Assessment Checklist:

<https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/small-system-risk-and-resilience-assessment-checklist>

Online Certification System - This online portal allows CWSs to certify completion of the Risk and Resilience Assessments and Emergency Response Plan online and receive reminders. Access at

<https://www.epa.gov/waterresilience/how-certify-your-risk-and-resilience-assessment-or-emergency-response-plan>

EPA Video link for certification process: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_sED8MCVTgo&feature=emb_logo

EPA's resource for completing ERPs - links below available at: www.mrwa.com/awiaresources.html

- Emergency Response Plan Template and Instructions
- How to Certify Your Risk and Resilience Assessment or Emergency Response Plan
- AWIA Frequently Asked Questions Document
- AWIA Risk Assessment and Emergency Response Plan Requirements Fact Sheet

If you need assistance with your AWIA Act requirements, call MRWA at 800-367-6792 for a technical advisor who can assist you!



NATIONAL RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION

NRWA™ *America's Largest Utility Membership*

NOW IS THE TIME TO ACT

Get Started on Your Water Utility Construction Project

Do you have a **Water Utility Construction Project**? Now is the time to act! Rates are at an all time low, and with the current pricing being opportunistic and taking action can result in benefits not only for your-self but for the customer as well. Consider the below items that detail positive reasons to act now that you can present to your governing body.

- Interest rates are at an all-time low.
- More project contractors are available, increasing the number of bids, potentially lowering project costs.
- Fuel costs are low, lowering pipe related costs.
- Most material costs for projects are down.
- Shipping costs for many have decreased.
- Road and water projects are easier to schedule due to decreased volume in traffic.
- Low construction costs and available contractors are not guaranteed to last.



USDA Rural Development is committed to helping improve the economy and quality of life in rural America. Offering loans, grants and loan guarantees are some of the ways Rural Development is supporting rural America.





Minnesota Rural Water Association
 217 12th Avenue SE
 Elbow Lake, MN 56531

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You Can Still Request Cloth Facemasks



In May, FEMA shipped 80,000 washable, reusable cloth facemasks to Minnesota for distribution to all Minnesota water and wastewater utilities that request them. To request masks, contact the Point of Distribution (POD) nearest you. Please visit mask information from MnWARN - www.mnwarn.org - to find the contact information for your closest POD and for additional details.

If your system has already received masks, you can request more, especially if your staff are coming close to exceeding the 15 wash recommended limit. All water/wastewater utilities are eligible; you do not have to be a Minnesota Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (MnWARN) member to receive masks.



Minnesota Rural Water Association is committed to helping you educate community youth about the importance and value of our drinking water resources! MRWA is e-mailing a collection of drinking water education materials and poster contest to members in October.

The deadline for the poster contest is February 3rd. City staff should then contact 4th grade teachers to make arrangements for them to participate in the education lessons and to select one local poster contest winner. Materials can also be downloaded from MRWA's Web site at: www.mrwa.com.

