

As Americans acknowledge the second anniversary of Hurricane Katrina's landfall on the gulf coast today, the Indiana Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (InWARN) is being launched to recognize the potentially devastating impact of emergencies and to advance statewide disaster preparedness. Please see the release below for more information about InWARN.

Thank you for supporting disaster preparedness by sharing information about this network. – Mandy

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Indiana Water and Wastewater Associations and Utilities
Collaborate to Launch Statewide Emergency Response Network**
InWARN Announces Launch, Invites Members

INDIANAPOLIS – To make statewide emergency response efforts quicker and more effective, the Indiana Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (InWARN) was launched today during a ceremony at the Statehouse at 11 a.m. **Three new members were also welcomed to the network, including South Bend Public Works, Valparaiso City Utilities and Veolia Indianapolis Water.**

Modeled after current networks in Florida (FlaWARN) and California (CalWARN), these formalized systems of “utilities helping utilities” deliver mutual aid to members following man-made emergency situations or natural disasters. InWARN’s launch date was selected in remembrance of the second anniversary of Hurricane Katrina’s landfall on the gulf coast, a time when FlaWARN helped utilities in Mississippi and Alabama recover in the aftermath of the storm.

“While it is very unlikely that utilities in Indiana will ever be damaged by a major hurricane like Katrina, the state’s water and wastewater systems can and have been damaged by tornados, floods, ice storms and earthquakes,” said Stanley S. Diamond, InWARN Steering Committee chair. “By establishing partnerships and response plans now, utilities and other associations are doing their part to protect the well-being of Hoosiers.”

InWARN will allocate utility personnel with the appropriate expertise, equipment and tools where needed to assess and assist the impacted water and wastewater systems in getting their systems operational as quickly as possible. This method of assistance is analogous to triage at a hospital.

“On behalf of the InWARN steering committee, I would like to thank the Indiana Section AWWA Emergency Response Committee for its leadership in launching the network statewide,” said Reggie Baker, security and counter-terrorism coordinator, Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). “I would also like to acknowledge other key supporters of InWARN’s creation, including IDEM, Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS), Indiana Association of Cities and Towns (IACT), Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC), and Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC).”

Following today’s announcement, utilities interested in joining the network can do so by completing the Mutual Aid Agreement (MAA). The InWARN network will be managed by the steering committee, working in cooperation with the Indiana Department of Environmental Management. IACT will serve as the network administrator during the first year, developing and maintaining the network’s Web site, processing the mutual aid agreements, managing the member database, and supporting other needs.

Utilities and associations interested in joining InWARN should contact Brandon Cockrum, IACT, at (317) 237-6200, extension 234, or bcockrum@citiesandtowns.org.

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