



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR

HAROLD LEGGETT, Ph.D.
SECRETARY

For Immediate Release

August 29, 2008

Contact: Tim Beckstrom

Phone: 225-219-3967

Contact: EPA Region 6

Phone: 214-665-2200

DEQ and EPA offer pre-hurricane tips for water treatment plants

BATON ROUGE – The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, offer the following hurricane preparedness tips with regard to safekeeping of water treatment facilities:

- Review your emergency response plan and make sure it and contacts are current.
- Establish clear lines of communication with local police and fire department. Request that local law enforcement check on any water staff that remain onsite at the water system. If communication channels are down, this check needs to continue on a routine basis until communication channels are reestablished.
- Stock up on first-aid supplies, non-perishable food, water, batteries and flashlights. Charge all wireless communication devices and check all normal and emergency communication equipment.
- Inspect and test water system source and treatment facility for security, backup lights, generators, backup pumps, controls, feeders, motors and availability of spare parts.
- Notify the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality if wastewater plants are taken off-line or Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals if drinking water plants are taken off-line.
- Have sufficient supplies of sand bags available, board all windows and doors and ensure that emergency electrical generators are not located in flood-prone areas of the facility. Obtain extra fuel for generators.
- Identify and schedule emergency operations and cleanup crews. This could consist of heavy equipment and extra personnel to assist in clean-ups after the storm.
- Notify State and Federal Agencies of location and telephone numbers of the emergency personnel. For public water systems, be sure to line up contacts to request emergency water supply, if necessary.
- Establish contacts to request emergency water supply, if necessary. This may include trucking in water from another potable water supply. Make arrangements with the local power utility to be prepared to restore power to the water system as a priority customer. Arrange to have materials and chemicals delivered to your site as soon as it is operationally safe.
- Prepare customers for possible boil water advisory status. Have a “Boil Water Notice” prepared, including multilingual; have emergency disinfection of drinking water procedures prepared for customers; and have “shelter-in-place” guidelines ready in case of release of hazardous materials.
- Establish alternative transportation strategies for rotating in core employees to the facility if high water prevents travel. Personnel should bring an emergency kit with them, which contains change of clothes, sleeping bag, flashlights, extra batteries, medication and other essentials. Ensure vehicles are fueled, serviceable and parked in a safe location.
- Ensure all essential personnel are trained to shut down and start up system in case of emergency.
- Secure important records in a well-protected location, including plant operations manual and water system mapping.

Refer to the list of preparation measures online at: www.epa.gov/safewater/hurricane/pre-hurricane.html