



Green Mountain
Water Environment
Association

COVID-19 Preparedness for Water & Wastewater Systems

Water and wastewater are essential services and need to be prepared in order to prevent interruptions due to COVID-19. Vermont Rural Water Association, Green Mountain Water Environment Association, and the Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation urge your systems to put the following measures in place to ensure seamless operations during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Emergency Preparedness

- Identify essential employees required to maintain continuous operation and designate an emergency backup or alternative shift rotations for these employees in the case they cannot report to work.
- Encourage personnel to practice good hygiene and infection-control practices. Encourage personnel to stay home if they are sick or exposed to someone who is sick. Provide work-from-home or sick leave options for those under quarantine.
- Limit meetings, gatherings and travel. Encourage personnel to postpone all non-essential travel and practice social distancing.
- Partner with neighboring systems, contractors, retirees, and the Vermont Rural Water Association to identify operators who can substitute for personnel on an emergency basis.
- Review and/or update your system's emergency response plan and contacts. Identify key customers—hospitals or care facilities—with special needs.
- Update and/or create detailed written instructions for crucial operations (i.e. shutdown, water quality sampling, public notification).
- Consider emergency food and overnight necessities at 24-hr facilities.
- Stay stocked on chemical supplies, test kits, and sample bottles. Order products ahead of schedule to avoid delays should chemical suppliers and labs experience understaffing.
- Generate a back-up supplier contact list for essential chemical and operation needs.
- Discuss cyber security precautions when using remote access. Back up critical files frequently as a prevention measure to restore data.

Substitute List

The Vermont Rural Water Association is compiling a list of certified water and wastewater operators who are willing to serve as substitute operators in the event that a system's personnel become sick. We encourage you to consider joining this substitute list. If you are willing to participate, please email info@vtruralwater.org with your contact information, location, and water and wastewater certifications and licenses. Compensation and liability details will need be negotiated between the system and the substitute.