

CoWARN FAQs



If my utility signs the MAA, are we obligated to provide assistance?

- After signing the MAA, there is no obligation to provide assistance...ever!

Why would my utility want to sign the MAA?

Signing the MAA provides you:

- Access to assistance in the form of personnel, equipment, and supplies during your time of need, no matter what type of emergency;
- With the possibility of receiving assistance quicker since the details are in the MAA;
- With a blueprint of how the provision of food, shelter, and reimbursement will work, thus freeing up more of your time to work on the response.
- With a network of other wastewater and water professionals;
- With the ability to ask for help in an easy way.

What obligations does my utility incur by signing the MAA?

- If you sign the MAA, and then choose to offer assistance during a specific emergency, then you are obligated to provide it under the terms and conditions of the MAA.
- If you sign the MAA, and then initiate an emergency of your own, you are obligated to reimburse the assisting utilities according to the terms and conditions of the MAA.

How does a utility obtain assistance when they need it?

- The Member identifies the resources needed.
- The Member can either contact another Member directly, or use the CoWARN website.

If my utility signs the MAA, who decides which of our resources will be offered?

- During each emergency, the responding utility decides which resources to offer for that specific emergency.

What happens when we need our resources back?

- Resources remain under the authority of the sending utility, and can be recalled at any time.

What happens if equipment on loan is damaged or stolen?

- According to the MAA, each Member shall determine what kinds and amount of insurance it should carry.

What are other benefits of participating in CoWARN?

- The possibility of a reduction in lost water/wastewater revenue during emergency.
- Improved ability to respond to emergencies due to training, lessons learned, and experiences exchanged from other CoWARN Members.
- Participation can help a community satisfy the NIMS compliance criteria of participating in intrastate mutual aid agreements.

Are CoWARN mutual aid and assistance activities eligible for FEMA reimbursement?

- FEMA reimbursement may apply only after a Presidential declaration of emergency.
- FEMA-specific requirements related to CoWARN include:
 - ❖ The MAA was in effect prior to the response/deployment to the incident;
 - ❖ The assistance must be requested by the utility in need;
 - ❖ The work performed, supplies used and materials consumed are directly related to the disaster and is otherwise eligible for FEMA assistance;
 - ❖ Documentation of rates and payment for services can be provided.

How is CoWARN different from existing statewide mutual aid programs managed by emergency management?

- Statewide mutual aid/assistance agreements typically require a declaration of emergency by a local and/or state official to activate the agreement; the MAA does not require a declaration of an emergency, saving critical time in response to needs identified by the utility.
- Statewide programs typically do not include private utilities; CoWARN does.
- Statewide agreements are managed by the state emergency management agency; CoWARN is managed by utilities.