
File No.: 18-0712

Agenda Date: 9/5/2018
Item No.: 2.3.

BOARD AGENDA MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT:

Emergency Services Coordination.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Santa Clara Valley Water District Board of Directors and the Santa Clara City Council consider directing their respective staff to commit to ongoing and strengthened coordination and partnership on emergency activities and service.

SUMMARY:

The six-person Emergency Services staff within the Emergency Services and Security Unit is responsible for the District's emergency operations. This includes leading the development of plans, conducting emergency management trainings and exercises, ensuring the availability of resources, and collaborating with other agencies.

The unit also has responsibility for the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). In addition to the EOC, the District also has two Department Operations Centers (DOCs) that are utilized to directly support field operations in Watershed and Water Utility.

The DOCs are managed within the Watershed and Water Utility Divisions of the District and are activated independently or in coordination with the EOC, depending upon the nature of the emergency. When a DOC is activated, staff in the DOC often interact and collaborate with employees from other entities such as District retailers or County agencies such as HazMat/Fire and the City of Santa Clara.

Some emergencies that the District could respond to include floods, levee or facility issues, water contamination, water supply disruption, pipeline damage, underground storage subsidence, dam failure and earthquake.

The District communicates with the cities and county in multiple ways regarding emergency preparedness and response. There are Operational Area Calls conducted by the county where the District shares information. The Emergency Services and Security Manager communicates directly with the municipal emergency managers as needed. The District also produces and distributes written communications to our stakeholders.

One of the lessons of the 2017 floods was the importance of collaborating with other agencies. Over the past year, through collaboration, open communication, and development of close professional ties, the District and the City of San Jose have developed a robust Emergency Action Plan (EAP) to respond to future incidents.

EAPs are scenario-specific and are based on streams, dams and affected locations. The District has also embarked on a program to develop EAPs for sites that are prone to flooding in collaboration with relevant municipalities or other agencies. These EAPs clarify responsibilities of the District and the municipalities/agencies.

Another important initiative is the District's active monitoring of storms and the development of metrics to ascertain the likelihood of floods. These efforts are designed to provide the District with the ability to better prepare for and respond to rapidly changing situations.

To prepare for future incidents, Emergency Services has initiated an aggressive training program. With the intent of enhancing their knowledge, District staff assigned to the EOC have participated in a series of classes on the basic EOC roles. Staff have also attended trainings based upon function. For example, a course specific to Logistics was well-attended in February 2018. It allowed attendees to dive deeper into their roles and identify gaps in their documentation or ability to fulfill potential demands in the aftermath of a major event. Additional trainings and exercises are planned for the future, as is the District's participation in our stakeholder agencies' events.

Response Structure

The District utilizes the Incident Command System (ICS), Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), and National Incident Management Systems (NIMS) for consistency in terminology, communications, and overall structure. These are the systems used by municipalities, which are based on emergency response best practices.

Personnel Resources

Over 160 District personnel are assigned to the EOC. Included in the roster is a wide range of categorical technical specialists. Some examples include pipeline emergency, levees, water quality, meteorology/hydro, and dam safety.

The District's EOC Public Information Branch, which is managed by the Public Information Officer, has well-developed capabilities. The functions within this branch include Information Gathering and Dissemination, Government Relations, CEO/Board Support, Media Relations, and Call Center Operations.

The District has redundant communication capabilities to communicate with District staff: hardline phone, text messaging, pagers, hand-held radio, County radios (Control 10), amateur radio, satellite phone, and mass notification (Blackboard Connect).

Equipment Resources

The District's construction equipment is based on watershed and creek management activities. Some examples of available equipment include excavators, dump trucks, loaders, backhoes and cranes.

These are some of the resources that could potentially be requested as mutual aid to support a response outside of the District.

With these planning efforts, resources and systems in place at the District, it's imperative that there is ongoing collaboration with the cities and county. An emergency services program can only be successful when implemented in coordination with its partners. An integral partner with the District is the City of Santa Clara, which illustrates the need for a strong partnership to build emergency capabilities.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact associated with this item.

CEQA:

The recommended action does not constitute a project under CEQA because it does not have a potential for resulting in direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: PowerPoint

UNCLASSIFIED MANAGER:

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