

Guidelines for the Implementation of Operational Assistance

March 26, 2020

Under the auspices of the Utah Water and Wastewater Emergency Response Network (UTWARN), the Rural Water Association of Utah (RWAU), the Utah Division of Drinking Water (DDW) and the Utah Division of Water Quality (DWQ) a pool of Operators has been compiled that may be able to provide operational assistance to other systems. If a request for assistance is received, contact between the requesting system and potential responders will be arranged by RWAU as the administrator of UTWARN. In all cases, the actual assistance and any and all agreements regarding that assistance shall be between the assisting system or operator and the requesting system.

Prior to assistance being initiated, the requesting system and the responding system along with the responding individual(s) shall work out all details of the response. The following items, along with any others specific to the particular system, should be discussed:

- Will the response require the operator to relocate to the requesting system? If so:
 1. For what estimated period of time?
 2. How will housing be provided?
 3. Who will be responsible for providing food?
- Will travel costs to and from the requesting system along with on-site travel during the assistance be provided? If so:
 1. How?
 2. At what rate? [It is recommended the IRS mileage rate be used]
- How will the responding operator's pay be covered?
 1. Responding operator continues to be paid by their system of employment with reimbursement to the employer by the requesting system? This should be the preferred method so that insurance and benefits are not jeopardized.
 2. Direct payment to the responding operator by the requesting system? This would be the preferred method for retired operators coming back to work or operators who are taking vacation time to perform this work.
 3. Will overtime be paid?
 4. Will hazard pay be authorized?
 5. Will per diem be paid?
- Safety and health issues and protections need to be discussed.
 1. Who is expected to provide safety equipment?
 2. What about sanitation and Personal Protective Equipment – wipes, spray, masks etc.
 3. How will the requesting system ensure that an environment where an employee was infected is now safe?

- What job duties will be expected of the responding operator?
 1. The responding operator's level of abilities need to be discussed and adjustments made accordingly.
 2. The requesting system needs to make certain that all information needed to do the job are available (Standard Operating Procedures, Sampling Plans, Passwords, etc.)
 3. Who is responsible for providing tools, equipment and parts required?
- How will the operator be covered if they suffer injury or sickness?
 1. How will Workman's Comp. be handled?
- The responding operator needs to be provided with a comprehensive contact list of those in authority at the requesting system and have the ability to communicate with them.
- The responding operator should keep detailed records of time and duties performed during their response. These records should be made available to the requesting system and to the responding system on a time frequency determined by agreement.
- Any and all other concerns not herein should be anticipated and addressed.

The stipulations between the requesting system and the responding system or operator may be made in writing or may simply be an oral agreement. The complexity of the stipulations decided upon may dictate this.

The Utah Division of Drinking Water, in the case of a water system, or the Utah Division of Water Quality, in the case of a wastewater system, need to be informed of the response taking place.