

**PMC Facility Water Shut Off Real World Event
& Communication Drill**
May 30, 2025

After Action Report
For
Petersburg Medical Center



Petersburg
MEDICAL CENTER

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On May 30, 2025, Petersburg Medical Center's Maintenance department began work on a planned water utilities shut down to replace an aged and failing backflow preventer valve. This was a real-world event.

PMC staff who worked on the repairs included Wolf Brooks, Skip Hallingstad, and Michael File from Maintenance. Additionally, a local plumber was hired as a contractor and an additional contractor from out of state was flown in for his expertise and experience with this type of large-scale repair. A Borough employee with Water Management, Blake Buotte, assisted with the initial facility water shut off.

Planning for this event began months ago when it was determined that the valve was failing. It was put on hold initially as the company who had made the original valve section was no longer in business. A new company had to be found which could make the replacement valve to exact specifications. Shipping was also a factor in the delay. Once the part arrived, repairs were again put on hold as there were precise fittings which were found that also had to be replaced. These had to be specially ordered to exact specifications, causing delay.

Work on the repairs was scheduled for the evening of May 30, 2025. A pre-shut off meeting was held with different departments to go over a timeline of events, the plan of action, expectations, and contingency plans in the case of additional or new line failures. That meeting occurred at 10:30am on 5/30/25 and included Chris Waechter, Nancy Higgins, Levy Boiter, Sonja Paul, Phil Hofstetter, Sheena Canton, Jeanette Ely, Wolf Brooks, Elise Kubo, and Michelle Rumble.

Communication

One Call Now was utilized to inform relevant staff of different events, including water shut off, water being turned back on, and a backup message if repairs were not able to be completed. This contact list included on call staff and department managers of affected areas. Additionally, Maintenance staff used the new PMC handheld radios to more easily keep in touch as repairs commenced and during fire watch as well as leak checks once the water was back on. Three handhelds were used with the fourth kept at the nurse's station and turned to the hospital frequency. The Borough PD and Fire Dept. were notified of the radio use and both stated that, while they don't typically monitor that internal frequency, they would check on it during the given timeframe as needed.

Timeline Day of Repairs

- 10:30am – Pre-shut off meeting with relevant, likely affected department contacts
- 8:30pm – water shut off started and line freezing began
- 8:41pm – initial One Call Now message goes out to previously identified staff
- 10:00pm – lines frozen, repair and replacement began
- 1:00am – replacement complete, water turned back on. Emergency Preparedness Coordinator received Tiger Text from Wolf that repairs were completed.
- 1:30am – One Call Now to previously identified staff went out alerting of water back on
- Ongoing from 1:00am Saturday morning until approximately 9:00am: leak checks and line flushing
- Debrief on Monday, 6/2/25 with Phil Hofstetter, Wolf Brooks, Sheena Canton, Michelle Rumble, Sonja Paul, Levy Boiter, Jennifer Bryner.

What Went Well

- The repair and replacement went very well and they were done ahead of projected schedule.
- Staff were careful and used alternate provided hand washing stations and provided water for flushing.
- PMC had plenty of non-potable water on hand for alternative use.
- Radio communication was clear and easy to use.
- Early planning included updating the Emergency Water Plan as well as the Dietary Utility Failure Plan. In addition to that update, the Dietary Manager ordered food to be used in the event of a full water failure.

What Could Be Improved

- Two hand washing stations had been set up, one at the ER and a portable one for use at the Nurse's station and LTC, as needed. A dedicated station for LTC would be better in the future.
- Though the Dietary sinks were flushed for approximately 30 minutes, the Saturday morning shift reported they still had sediment in the water initially. Additional flushing or line checks may be needed for future utility shut off.
- One Call Now has fewer mobile app features than on desktop which limited its use somewhat. A list of relevant personnel had to be created the day before to ensure previously identified staff were the only ones who received the messages. It was not meant to be call list wide. Additionally, though the text only feature was selected, some staff also received phone calls and emails when the alerts went out.
- One Call Now needs to be updated when staff change their home or cell numbers as one person stated they did not receive the text due to a number change.

Conclusion

Replacement of the aged and failing backflow preventer assembly for Petersburg Medical Center was a months long process due to the intricacies of ordering precisely calibrated parts, wait times for builds and shipping, and the aged nature of the facility's utility systems. Wolf Brooks and the Maintenance department completed the planning and execution of the work with almost no impact to the facility itself and none at all to daily operations. Communication within the facility and to identified staff went well both with the One Call Now notification system, all staff received notice either text or email, as well as the new handheld radios. While future repairs can be expected given the aging facility, the efficiency and competence demonstrated by the Maintenance department underscores their ability to handle the difficult situations of the facility.