



TOWN OF WARRENTON

Office of Emergency Management

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TO: The Honorable Mayor and Members of the Warrenton Town Council

FROM: Johnny H. Switzer, Emergency Management Coordinator

DATE: February 11, 2025

SUBJECT: Office of Emergency Management Actions and Plans

This letter serves as an overview of the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) and outlines the department's mission, responsibilities, and key objectives.

The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is responsible for planning, coordinating, and implementing all-hazards emergency preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation activities within the Town of Warrenton. We work closely with local, regional, and state agencies to ensure the safety and well-being of our community members during emergencies.

The OEM maintains a comprehensive collection of vital documents, including all written ordinances related to emergency preparedness, detailed emergency plans and guides for various scenarios, and informative citizen preparedness bulletins. To facilitate timely communication and access to crucial information, the Office of Emergency Management also operates a dedicated community hotline, providing a direct line of contact for residents to seek assistance, receive updates, and report any concerns during an emergency.

The OEM is committed to working closely with the Town Council and Mayor to ensure the safety and well-being of all residents. I look forward to collaborating with you on emergency management issues and building a more resilient community.

Key Responsibilities:

- **Emergency Planning & Preparedness:**
 - Developing and maintaining the Town's comprehensive emergency operations plan.
 - Conducting exercises and drills to test emergency response procedures.
 - Maintaining and updating emergency contact lists and critical facility information.
 - Conducting community outreach and public education programs on emergency preparedness.
- **Emergency Response:**
 - Activating the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) as needed during emergencies.
 - Coordinating emergency response activities with local, regional, and state agencies.
 - Providing support to first responders and other emergency personnel.
- **Emergency Recovery:**
 - Assisting in the recovery efforts following an emergency event.
 - Coordinating with community partners to provide assistance to affected residents.
- **Emergency Mitigation:**
 - Identifying and mitigating potential hazards within the Town.
 - Developing and implementing long-term strategies to reduce the impact of future emergencies.

Key Objectives:

- Enhance the Town's ability to effectively respond to all types of emergencies.
- Improve community resilience and preparedness.
- Strengthening partnerships with local, regional, and state agencies.
- Promote a culture of emergency preparedness within the Town.

Vital Emergency Management Ordinances, Documents, and Plans:

- **Town of Warrenton Ordinance 2011-11:**

This ordinance establishes Chapter 20, "Emergency Management," within the Town of Warrenton's Code. This chapter outlines the framework for emergency preparedness, response, and recovery within the town. It covers topics such as:

- The creation of an Emergency Management Agency or Department.
- The designation of an Emergency Management Coordinator.
- Procedures for declaring local states of emergency.
- Guidelines for emergency response and recovery operations.
- Roles and responsibilities of various town departments and agencies during emergencies.
- Public education and outreach programs on emergency preparedness.
- The authority of the town government to take necessary actions during emergencies.

In essence, Ordinance 2011-11 serves as the foundational document for emergency management within the Town of Warrenton, providing a legal and operational framework for the town to effectively respond to and recover from various emergencies.

- **Emergency Operations Plan (EOP):**

The Town of Warrenton Emergency Operations Plan is a comprehensive document that outlines the town's strategy for managing emergencies. The plan was established in 2022 and is reviewed annually and re-adopted every four years. This plan includes:

- Procedures for responding to various types of emergencies, such as natural disasters (floods, storms, etc.), man-made disasters (fires, hazardous materials incidents, etc.), and other threats.
- Roles and responsibilities of different agencies and personnel within the town government during an emergency.
- Communication plans for alerting the public and coordinating with other agencies.
- Resource management strategies for allocating personnel, equipment, and supplies effectively.
- Evacuation and shelter plans for protecting residents and providing assistance.
- Recovery procedures for restoring essential services and assisting the community in recovering from the impacts of an emergency.

- **Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP):**

The Town of Warrenton's Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) is a crucial document that outlines how the town government will continue to function in the event of a disruption. This could include natural disasters, pandemics, cyberattacks, or other emergencies that significantly impact normal operations. The COOP addresses:

- **Essential Functions:** Identifying the core services the town must continue to provide during a crisis (e.g., public safety, emergency response, essential government services).
- **Alternate Facilities:** Establishing alternative locations for essential personnel to work from if the primary offices are inaccessible.
- **Communication Systems:** Ensuring reliable communication channels for internal and external communication during a disruption.
- **Data Backup and Recovery:** Protecting critical data and ensuring its availability in the event of system failures.
- **Succession Planning:** Designating alternate personnel to assume critical roles in the absence of key officials.
- **Testing and Training:** Regularly testing and training personnel on the COOP to ensure its effectiveness.

The COOP helps the town government maintain essential functions, minimize disruption to services, and ensure the safety and well-being of its residents during a crisis.

- **Community Water System Emergency Response Plan:**

The Town of Warrenton's Community Water System Emergency Response Plan outlines the procedures for responding to emergencies that may disrupt the town's water supply. These emergencies could include:

- **Natural Disasters:** Earthquakes, floods, hurricanes, and other natural events that can damage water infrastructure.
- **Man-made Disasters:** Fires, explosions, and other incidents that can contaminate or disrupt water service.
- **Terrorist Attacks:** Acts of terrorism that target water systems.
- **Public Health Emergencies:** Waterborne disease outbreaks or other public health threats.

The plan includes:

- **Assessment and Monitoring:** Procedures for assessing the impact of an emergency on the water system and monitoring water quality.
- **Emergency Response Actions:** Steps to be taken to maintain or restore water service, such as activating emergency water sources, implementing water conservation measures, and conducting repairs.
- **Public Notification:** Procedures for informing the public about water service disruptions, boil water advisories, and other important information.
- **Coordination and Communication:** Protocols for coordinating with other agencies, such as public health officials, emergency management agencies, and law enforcement.
- **Resource Management:** Strategies for managing resources, such as personnel, equipment, and supplies, during an emergency.

The Community Water System Emergency Response Plan ensures the town's ability to respond effectively to water system emergencies, protect public health, and maintain essential water services for its residents.

- **Warrenton & Airlie Dam Emergency Action Plan:**

The Warrenton & Airlie Dam Emergency Action Plan is a critical document that outlines the procedures for responding to emergencies related to the dam. This includes:

- **Dam Failure:** Procedures for evacuating residents and businesses in the potential inundation zone if the dam were to fail.
- **Flooding:** Plans for responding to flooding caused by heavy rainfall, dam overtopping, or other factors.
- **Structural Issues:** Procedures for addressing potential structural problems with the dam, such as erosion or seepage.
- **Public Safety:** Measures to ensure the safety of residents and emergency responders during an emergency.
- **Communication:** Protocols for communicating with the public, emergency responders, and other relevant agencies.

The plan includes detailed maps of the potential inundation zones, evacuation routes, and emergency shelters. It also outlines the roles and responsibilities of various agencies involved in emergency response, such as law enforcement, fire departments, the Virginia Department of Transportation, local, state, and federal regulatory agencies, and emergency management officials.

- **Radiological Emergency Response Plan Ingestion Exposure Pathways:**

The Town of Warrenton's Radiological Emergency Response Plan addresses potential ingestion exposure pathways related to the North Anna Nuclear Power Plant.

- **Ingestion Exposure:** This refers to the potential for radioactive materials to enter the human body through the consumption of contaminated food or water.
- **Potential Pathways:** The plan outlines potential pathways for ingestion exposure, such as:
 - **Contaminated Food:**
 - **Locally Grown Produce:** Radioactive materials could potentially contaminate local crops or livestock feed if released into the environment.
 - **Milk:** If radioactive materials contaminate pastures used for grazing, milk from cows grazing in those areas could become contaminated.
 - **Contaminated Water:**
 - **Drinking Water Supplies:** If radioactive materials contaminate local water sources, drinking water supplies could become unsafe.
 - **Agricultural Water:** If irrigation water is contaminated, it could potentially contaminate crops.
 - **Mitigation Strategies:** The plan includes strategies to mitigate the risks of ingestion exposure, such as:
 - **Food and Water Monitoring:** Implementing procedures for monitoring food and water supplies for contamination.
 - **Protective Actions:** Advising residents to avoid consuming locally grown produce or milk if contamination is suspected.
 - **Alternative Water Sources:** Providing alternative sources of drinking water if local supplies are contaminated.

Important Note: The risk of significant radiological contamination from the North Anna Nuclear Power Plant is considered low. However, having a robust emergency response plan is essential for the safety and well-being of the community.

- **Emergency Procedures Guide:**

The Town of Warrenton's Emergency Procedures Guide is a valuable resource that provides guidance on how to respond to a variety of potential emergencies. This guide covers a range of hazards, including:

- **Man-made Hazards:**
 - **Bomb Threats:** Procedures for receiving and responding to bomb threats, including evacuation procedures and search protocols.
 - **Violent Incidents:** Guidelines for responding to active shooter situations, hostage situations, and other acts of violence.
 - **Fires:** Procedures for responding to fires in various settings, including buildings, vehicles, and outdoor areas.
 - **Medical Emergencies:** Guidelines for handling medical emergencies, such as cardiac arrest, stroke, and other life-threatening conditions.
 - **Hazardous Materials Incidents:** Procedures for responding to spills, leaks, or releases of hazardous materials.
- **Natural Hazards:**
 - **Severe Weather:** Guidelines for responding to severe weather events, such as tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, and winter storms.
 - **Infrastructure Outages:** Procedures for responding to power outages, water disruptions, and heating/cooling failures.
- **Other Emergencies:**
 - **Suspicious Objects and Persons:** Procedures for reporting and responding to suspicious packages, individuals, or activities.

The Emergency Procedures Guide provides clear and concise instructions for employees and other personnel on how to recognize emergencies, take appropriate safety precautions, and assist in the response effort. It also includes contact information for emergency services, such as law enforcement, fire departments, and emergency medical services.

This guide is a valuable resource for all employees and personnel within the Town of Warrenton, helping to ensure a coordinated and effective response to emergencies and enhance the safety and security of the community.

- **Hazardous Weather Action Plan:**

The Town of Warrenton's Hazardous Weather Action Plan outlines the procedures for responding to severe weather events. This plan is tailored to special events and other related outdoor activities. The plan includes:

- **Monitoring and Warning Systems:** Procedures for monitoring weather forecasts and issuing warnings to the public, such as severe thunderstorm warnings, tornado warnings, and flash flood warnings.
- **Emergency Shelters:** Identifying and preparing designated emergency shelters for residents to seek refuge during severe weather events.
- **Communication Plans:** Establishing communication channels for disseminating warnings and updates to the public, such as local media outlets, emergency alert systems, and social media.
- **Public Information and Education:** Conducting public education campaigns to inform residents about severe weather safety tips, such as developing an emergency plan, preparing an emergency kit, and knowing where to seek shelter.
- **Coordination with Other Agencies:** Establishing protocols for coordinating with other agencies, such as law enforcement, fire departments, and emergency management agencies, during severe weather events.
- **Resource Management:** Identifying and securing necessary resources, such as emergency supplies, equipment, and personnel, to support response and recovery efforts.

The Hazardous Weather Action Plan helps the Town of Warrenton to minimize the impacts of severe weather events, protect the safety of its residents, and ensure a coordinated and effective response.