

From: Threat Advisory DEQ
To: TANS for Drinking Water and Wastewater Officials; TANS for Local Health Departments
Date: 4/6/2007 11:57:22 AM
Subject: U S EPA Effective Risk and Crisis Communication during Water Security Emergencies: message mapping

To: Public Water and Wastewater Officials (TANS list)

Title: Threat Advisory Notification System [TANS] Notice # 30

Purpose: To Forward US EPA Effective Risk and Crisis Communication during Water Security Emergencies: Message Mapping

Distribution: FOUO [for official use only]

1. Anticipation of natural or unnatural events, i.e., power loss, chemical or biological contamination, or bomb explosion by a planning process called 'message mapping' can predict 95 % of questions likely to be asked and provide the 'sound bites' of clear and concise answers with supporting information ahead of time for the indicated scenario.

2. The attached report provides an easy to follow, step-by-step guide on message mapping for water sector utilities. Message mapping is a specific technique for developing effective verbal or written communication to deliver to the public and the media during a crisis. This document can also be found on the WaterISAC Secure Portal in What's New, and the Emergency Response folder in the Library.

The report outlines the background, benefits and steps to message mapping and details techniques for developing effective crisis messages. The report was developed as a result of three message mapping workshops that were convened by EPA in 2005-2006 with water sector participation.

The products provided in the report include lists of potential questions that could be asked in a crisis and message maps developed for a subset of anticipated questions from each scenario. The scenarios were: possible chemical contamination of a reservoir, bomb explosion, credible threat of an unknown agent in a certain location, loss of power affecting water delivery systems, pesticide contamination and biological contamination.

The report also includes a list of stakeholders who will need information during a water sector incident as defined by workshop participants, and a list of several general rules of risk communication developed by Dr. Vincent Covello, the report's primary author. Dr. Covello facilitated several workshops with water sector participants to develop the message maps. EPA staff managed the workshops and also contributed to the report.

If you have any questions regarding this advisory or would like to report a suspicious incident please contact the WaterISAC at WaterISAC-analyst@waterisac.org or call 1-866-H2o-ISAC.

Thank you,
WaterISAC Team

Robert F. Babcock
Security and Emergency Response Coordinator
Water Bureau
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
Constitution Hall, 2nd floor
525 W. Allegan St.
P. O. Box 30273
Lansing, MI 48933-7773
USA
voice: 517 373 8566
fax: 517 335 0889
email: babcockr@michigan.gov