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State Surgeon General

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Noah Valenstein
Secretary

Subject: Issuance of Precautionary Boil Water Notices during Hurricanes, Tropical Storms, or Other Unforeseen Emergencies for Public Water Systems

Dear Water System Owner/Manager:

With the start of the 2021 hurricane season, the Florida Department of Health (DOH) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) would like to provide you with some information regarding precautionary boil water notices (PBWNs) and DEP's emergency event tracking database. The goal of distributing this information is to ensure effective communication and consistency between DEP, DOH, the county health departments (CHDs), the impacted water system, and the water customers.

When a PBWN is issued due to an emergency, the impacted water system is required to notify its customers as soon as possible. The impacted water system must also consult with their regulatory agency (DEP District Office or Approved CHD [ACHD]) as soon as possible. Where DEP is the regulatory agency, the local CHD must also be notified. A checklist to assist in the PBWN process is enclosed. Examples of PBWN may be found at:

<http://www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/drinking-water/boil-water-notice-guidance.html>

We are also providing community public water systems with a PBWN fact sheet (*Precautionary Boil Water Notice – What Should You Do?*). This fact sheet explains what your customer can expect if a PBWN has been issued and the water system's requirements to rescind it. **We encourage you to provide this fact sheet to your customers during their next billing cycle and post it to your webpage to ensure this information is readily available BEFORE an emergency.** You may also supplement it with local information that you deem important.

In addition to the PBWN checklist and fact sheet, we are also providing you with information on DEP's emergency event tracking database. DEP has transitioned from the StormTracker database to WATER Tracker, an updated and more robust emergency event tracking database. The WATER Tracker database allows facilities to update their status (fully operational, partially operational, non-operational) immediately following a storm event. The facility may also use WATER Tracker to request assistance (personnel, equipment, fuel, etc.).

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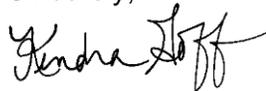
Once the impacted counties are identified following a storm event, DEP will activate the counties in the emergency event tracking database and provide notice of activation to those counties. To assist in recovery efforts and expedite response, WATER Tracker should be updated by the impacted facilities as soon as practicable. You can access WATER Tracker at <https://flwatertracker.com/>. If you forget your log-in information or need assistance, an email and phone number is provided on the web site, or you can contact: WATERTracker@floridadep.gov.

During an emergency, it may be necessary to transport drinking water to facilities, individuals, or organizations. The drinking water supply must be safe and properly handled or additional public health problems may occur. A new Interagency Bulk Water Transport guidance document was developed and can be found at: <http://www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/drinking-water/documents/emer-bulk-transp-use-drink-water.pdf>

If you have any questions regarding WATER Tracker, please contact either your DEP district office's Drinking Water Program or ACHD Office Drinking Water Section. The list of contacts can be found at: <https://floridadep.gov/water/source-drinking-water/content/organization-drinking-water-program>.

For questions regarding PBWNS, please contact your CHD. The list of CHD contacts can be found at: <http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/county-health-departments/find-a-county-health-department/index.html>.

Sincerely,



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