

STAY CALM: LET NYRWA HELP

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At one time or another each and every one of us has had to react to, and survive an emergency situation whether it was in our personal or professional lives. Most of the time they are very stress filled events, and can often lead to poor decision making due to the exhaustion that comes from trying to resolve the issue as fast and efficiently as possible.

Webster's Dictionary defines an emergency as, "an unforeseen combination of circumstances or the resulting state that calls for immediate action". A secondary definition, which I find is much more common in our industry is, "a usually distressing event or condition that can often be anticipated or prepared for but seldom exactly foreseen". Usually in our line of work, as trained and seasoned Operations Specialists, we can predict the scenarios that could happen, but rarely are they corrected, generally due to a lack of funding or leadership from above. However, when an emergency situation occurs, we need to be ready to take corrective action immediately, to continue to serve our customers and residents with the exceptionally high level of service with which they have grown accustomed.

We here at the NYRWA have deliberated and researched the concept of what is an emergency?, and how can we be of assistance? We determined that an emergency can encompass a wide range of events, depending on an even more vast range of circumstances. To us, an emergency could range from a natural disaster such as Hurricane Sandy with its wind damage, flooding, long-term power outage, equipment loss or failure, and facility damage, all the way down to a main or large service line leak. Not every water and wastewater system is built, staffed, or equipped the same, so the system vulnerabilities will vary based on system size, financial and managerial capacity, location, age, and ability of the operations personnel. While a main break might not be an emergency for a large village or city, it may be a significant situation for a small municipality with limited resources, equipment, and personnel.

As always, the NYRWA strives to provide the very highest level of assistance to each and every one of you, our member systems. In recent years our Board of Directors, CEO, and staff researched and elected to provide our members with the added value of having a 24/7/365 call line whereby you could call for emergency assistance from our field staff after our normal office business hours of Monday through Friday 8am – 4pm. The

NYRWA Emergency Line is 1-877-239-0101. We respectfully request that you still call our main office at 1-888-697-8725 during regular business hours if you have an emergency and our office staff will direct your call immediately. As always, if you have a direct contact number for our field staff member nearest you, please feel free to contact them directly. Through the support and guidance of our CEO, Patricia Scalera, and our Board of Directors, we have started to put together (2) emergency response trailers with basic equipment such as generators and pumps, which will be centralized in the state so we can more rapidly respond to emergencies as they arise. We hope to continue to build our response equipment inventory to continue to provide such valuable services.

So to answer the question "what is an emergency?" Well, it's different for each and every system. To our staff, an emergency for after hours response most usually is an urgent or immediate threat to public health or property, such as, but not limited to, insufficient pressure or supply, loss of service, or response to a natural disaster.

We realize that in many emergency situations you rely on our field staff for expertise or specialty equipment, and we hope to always be there to provide that service. However, we also understand that in many cases, you may just need someone to listen to you describe what has happened and how you plan to fix it, just to be reassured that your plan makes sense. We understand your exhaustion and stress level in such a situation, and will be there to listen and make suggestions or recommendations based on the facts. We rely on you just as much as you rely on the NYRWA, that's what makes for a great team! Working together, we obviously hope to mitigate or at least limit the number of emergencies you will need to endure. But rest assured, should an emergency arise, the NYRWA is here to help you provide....Quality on Tap! 💧💧💧

