



Utilities Department

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CITY OF MODESTO UTILITIES DEPARTMENT EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN FOR CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

BACKGROUND:

Since the outbreak of the worldwide novel coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Stanislaus County Public Health Agency and the City of Modesto have been monitoring the situation in anticipation of its arrival in our community. On March 11, 2020, the Stanislaus County Public Health Agency received confirmation that two adult male residents of the county tested positive for the coronavirus by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). These tests are being confirmed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The Public Health Officer believes the coronavirus will continue to spread throughout our community and the length of time this pandemic will last is unknown.

OPERATION OBJECTIVE(S):

The City of Modesto's Utilities Department (Utilities) provides essential water and wastewater services which must be continued or restored quickly in the case of a disruption. The objective of this plan is to outline a phased approach to:

1. Reduce the risk of employee exposure to the coronavirus by implementing practices that limit employee contact with potentially exposed person(s) when feasible, identifying vulnerable employees and evaluating alternate work assignments, and ensuring best practices regarding hygiene and safety protocols are being followed.
2. Outline a staffing plan that which will ensure the continuity of Utilities operations in the case of severe absenteeism due to exposure or large-scale community circumstances.

PHASE 1: (Current)

- Promote proper hygiene, following CDC guidelines, postponing or cancelling social gatherings and conferences, practicing social distancing (staying 6ft away from others). Staff will continue to wear PPEs.
 - Disposal of PPEs as biohazard on a case-by-case basis.
- Provide hand sanitizer and sanitizing wipes to staff. Encourage employees to regularly sanitize high contact surfaces in the office and equipment, such as desks, countertops, steering wheels, shifters, tablets, phones, door handles, elevator buttons, faucets, etc. Employees are encouraged to wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and follow other guidelines from the CDC.

- Provide frequent updates and messaging to staff to reduce fear and rumors.
- Establish a comprehensive list of vulnerable employees through email asking them to self-identify if they believe they are in the “At Risk” population.
 - Encourage employees to state that they have a concern and the supervisor will work with the employee to reduce potential risk.

PHASE 2: (Implementation)

- Develop and implement additional precautionary measures to limit the spread of the virus amongst Utilities’ staff to ensure proper staffing of essential water and wastewater operations.
 - Consider alternatives to staff reporting to duty locations. Employees are to contact their supervisor directly via text message or phone, go to their assigned vehicle, and proceed to their work location.
 - Treat disposal of PPEs as a biohazard until further notice.
 - Develop procedures for receiving deliveries and contractors/other outside vendors.
 - Maintain required social distance with employees, customers and vendors, when possible.
 - Utilities will limit interaction with the public, except for essential/emergency services.
 - Evaluate cancelling non-essential briefings/meetings/training days and/or using alternative means where feasible (video conferencing).
 - Emailing safety meetings and information to each employee. This safety material is to be reviewed by work teams.
 - Identify opportunities for employees at work remotely and receive their daily work assignments using their work tablet.
 - Encourage operations and maintenance employees to limit group contact in common areas during the course of the work day.
 - Offer or assign alternative work assignments for “at-risk” employees, when possible.
 - Prioritize ongoing Capital Improvement Program construction projects, and identify number of projects that will can be postponed.
- Identifying cross-functional teams between water, wastewater and engineering divisions.
 - Management continuity
 - Identify management redundancy and oversight
 - Temporary assignments for management
 - Utility Plant Operators
 - Utility Services Workers
 - Administrative Support
 - Plant Mechanics
 - Customer Service
 - Engineering
 - IT Support
- Utilities Management and Administration Team:
 - Most managers can work remotely (emails, phone, conference calls)

- EC manager needs computer set up.
 - Temporarily assign management responsibilities to others, as needed.
- Utilities Administration can work remotely (emails, phone, conference calls)
 - If TSP stays open, will need staff to:
 - front counter support, check in/out pool vehicles, transit support, internal support functions with other departments.
- Identify Utilities Department's Administrative Needs
 - Continuity of Department administration
 - Hierarchy for approvals
 - Purchasing should not be frozen for Utilities
 - To maintain essential services for all customers
 - Payroll, invoice tracking, coding and billing
 - Timekeepers
 - Analysts, ASTs, AOAs
 - Dispatch/communication and customer service
 - Water quality and data logging
 - Mail services
 - Identify additional EOC resources from non-essential positions
- Prioritize ongoing Engineering Capital Improvement Program construction projects, and identify number of projects that will/can be postponed.
 - Currently 22 Active Projects in Construction are Priority
 - No Active Projects in Design are critical – primarily replacement projects
 - Priority projects would include those currently in construction or associated with consultant agreements
 - Working remotely is limited due to hardware and software
- Identify and prioritize key Utilities duties and infrastructure to ensure continuous operation.
- Identify minimum staffing, key personnel and positions to ensure continued operations and maintenance of essential Utilities infrastructure.

Wastewater Division

Percentage Staff Available	Number of Staff	Key Infrastructure Maintained	Work Units	Schedule	Notes
100%	UPOs: 18 USWs: 44 Mech: 25 ECS: 7 Electricians: 9 Lab: 6	WQC Plant, Sewer trunks/mains, pump stations, customer service calls, construction, SSOs	UPOs, Mech, electric, USW construction, customer service, maintenance, ECS, lab	4/10, 3/12, 9/80	Full operations
75%	UPOs: 13 USWs:33 Mech:19 ECS:5 Electricians:7 Lab:5	80% WQC Plant, Sewer trunks/mains, 80% pump stations, customer service, 80% construction, SSOs	UPOs, Mech, electric, USW construction, customer service, maintenance, ECS, lab	4/10, 3/12, 9/80	Reduced sampling, emergency construction, reactive maintenance
50%	UPOs: 9 USWs:22 Mech:13 ECS:4 Electricians:4 Lab:3	WQC Plant, Sewer trunks/mains, 40-50% pump stations, customer service, construction, SSOs	UPOs, Mech, electric, USW construction, customer service, maintenance, ECS, lab	4/10 + OT, 3/12 (Wed off), 9/80 + OT alternate/ alternative schedules	Permit/compliance sampling only, reactive maintenance, reduced lab analysis. emergency construction, essential PM/failures
25%	UPOs: 5 USWs:11 Mech:6 ECS:2 Electricians:2 Lab:2	WQC Plant, Sewer mains, 25% pump stations, customer service, construction, SSOs	UPOs, Mech, electric, USW construction, customer service, maintenance, ECS, lab	3/12 + OT, 3/12 (Wed off), 9/80 + OT alternate/ alternative schedules	25% Permit/ compliance sampling, no WW discharge, reactive maintenance only, 25% lab analysis. emergency construction, essential functions only

Water Division

Percentage Staff Available	Number of Staff	Key Infrastructure Maintained	Work Units	Schedule	Notes
100%	UPOs: 15 USWs: 58 Dispatch: 5	(99) Water wells, (11) tanks, transmission/distribution mains, valves, generators, customer service	UPOs, USW Water Quality, conservation, construction, maintenance, customer service	Standard, 9/80	Full operations
75%	UPOs: 11 USWs: 43 Dispatch: 4	(99) Water wells, (11) tanks, transmission/distribution mains, valves, generators, customer service	UPOs, USW Water Quality, conservation, construction, maintenance, customer service	Standard, 9/80 + OT, alternate schedule	Permit/compliance sampling only, Prioritize emergencies, dependent on MID, reactive maintenance
50%	UPOs: 8 USWs: 29 Dispatch: 3	(99) Water wells, (11) tanks, transmission/distribution mains, valves, generators, customer service	UPOs, USW Water Quality, maintenance, customer service	5/8, 9/80 + OT, alternate/alternative schedule	Permit/compliance sampling only, Prioritize wells and tanks, reactive maintenance, emergency construction, essential PM/failures, dependent on MID
25%	UPOs: 4 USWs: 15 Dispatch: 2	Prioritize (99) Water wells, (11) tanks, transmission/distribution mains, valves, generators, customer service	UPOs, USW Water Quality, maintenance, customer service	5/8, 9/80 + OT, alternate/alternative schedule	Permit/compliance sampling only, reactive maintenance, emergency construction, essential functions only

Engineering Division

Percentage Staff Available	Key Responsibilities	Work Units	Schedule
100%	Design and Project Management, Construction Administration activities, Progress payments for consultant and construction agreements, reporting	Administration, Engineering Design, Construction Administration	Standard, 9/80
75%	Reduce engineering focus to priority projects, Construction Administration activities, Progress payments for consultant and construction agreements	Engineering Division Manager, Senior Civil Engineers, key Administrative staff, Construction Inspectors, Associate Civil Engineers	Standard, 9/80
50%	Reduce engineering focus to projects in construction, Construction Administration activities, progress payments for consultant and construction agreements, reporting	Engineering Division Manager, Senior Civil Engineers, key Administrative staff Construction Inspectors, Associate Civil Engineers or rotational engineering teams.	Standard, 9/80, alternate/ alternative schedule
25%	Reduce focus on Construction activities, progress payments for consultant and construction agreements	Engineering Division Manager, Senior Civil Engineers (rotational), Construction Inspectors (Rotation Schedule), key Administrative staff	Standard, 9/80, alternate/ alternative schedule

To prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Utilities Department has revised its activities for the months of March and April.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES:

Upcoming Utilities Events	Date	Notes
RecFest	March 21 st	Postponed
Water Corp Yard Ribbon Cutting	April 9 th	Postponed
Earth Day – April 18 th	April 18 th	Cancelled
Wastewater Tour – High School Counselors	April 21 st	Postponed
Love Modesto	April 25 th	Postponed
Modesto 150 th – Open House & Public Works Day	May 16 th	Postponed

Upcoming Utilities Conferences/Travel	Employees	Date(s)	Notes
Operator Grade IV Exam and IV Exam Prep, Vacaville, CA		March 16-18 th	Staff attending, less than 50
Operator Grade V and V Exam Prep, Vacaville, CA		March 16-18 th	Staff attending, less than 50
RF MacDonald Pump Training		March 17-18 th	Postponed
Basic Inspector Academy, Rancho Cordova, CA		March 16-20 th	Postponed
Disney Institute, Anaheim, CA		March 24-26 th	
CWEA Annual Conference, Reno, NV		March 31-April 3 rd	Postponed until October
CA-NV AWWA Spring Conference 2020 Anaheim, CA		April 6-9 th	Postponed
CalRural 2020 Expo, South Lake Tahoe, NV		April 27-30 th	Postponed

PHASE 3: (Amendments to the Plan)

The Utilities Department is an essential service department, and as civil service workers, we have the responsibility to ensure the community is provided safe and reliable water and wastewater services during this critical situation. The needs of the City should take precedence.



This is a dynamic plan, and is subject to amendments as new information is received.

Reference links:

California Department of Public Health Interim Guidance

<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CHCQ/LCP/CDPH%20Document%20Library/AFL-20-09.pdf>

CDC COVID-19 General Information

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>

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Director of Utilities

Date

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