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NIMS *Alert*

December 15, 2006
NA: 022-06
NIMS Integration Center
202-646-3850

NIMS Integration Center Announces the Water and Wastewater Utility Model Mutual Aid Agreement

FEMA's NIMS Integration Center announces the model mutual aid agreement being promoted for use by the Water Sector. Mutual aid is a national priority and this model agreement will serve as a resource for water and wastewater industries at all jurisdictional levels.

This model agreement contains procedures and standards for a water and wastewater utility Mutual Aid and Assistance Program. It specifically promotes a "utility helping utility" concept. Utility membership based associations have been working together to promote adoption of state-wide mutual aid networks. The model is based on existing water and wastewater utility mutual aid and assistance agreements implemented in California, Florida, Texas and Washington. The two major models that have been developed to work in conjunction with one another are the National Rural Water Association's Rural Water Mutual Aid Agreement and a State Wide Water and Wastewater Utility Emergency Support Network and the American Water Works Association White Paper for setting up mutual aid agreements.

Representatives of the water and wastewater industry can use this model agreement as a tool to facilitate discussion on drafting an intrastate mutual aid and assistance agreement that best illustrates their needs. Additionally, the model mutual aid agreement allows for the inclusion and connection with interstate mutual aid and assistance agreements and can serve as a resource in interstate agreement development.

Mutual aid agreements support the National Mutual Aid and Resource Management Initiative to establish a comprehensive and integrated system that allows jurisdictions to share resources among mutual aid partners. In an effort towards preparedness, mutual aid agreements will provide disasters of differing scales, resource alternatives outside of their jurisdiction.

This model agreement has been submitted to the NIMS Integration Center and will be made available on the NIMS web page at <http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/rm/ma.shtm>