

Reclamation Manual

Policy

Subject: Emergency Management

Purpose: To provide for the safety of the public and protect environmental resources from incidents at our facilities by (1) taking reasonable and prudent actions necessary to ensure timely notification to potentially affected jurisdictions of such incidents so that warning and evacuation of the public can be accomplished; and (2) defining program needs and requirements essential to maintain self regulation by line managers, be responsive to public safety, and satisfy legal requirements during operations or emergency incidents at our facilities.

Authority: Commissioner of Reclamation's Policy Memoranda of February 27, 1995, May 25, 1994, and June 21, 1993, respectively titled Policy for Establishing an Emergency Management Program at Reclamation Facilities, Emergency Operations Plans, and Final Policy on Early Warning Systems; Reclamation Project Act of 1902 and Supplementary Acts; Reclamation Safety of Dams Act of 1978 and Amendments of 1984; National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (as amended); Department of the Interior – Departmental Manual Part 753 (or subsequent replacement documents); Oil Prevention Act of 1990 (OPA); Clean Water Act of 1972 (as amended); Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of 1986 (Title III); Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA); Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA); and Project Specific Authorizations.

Contact: Facilities & Operations Support, D-5500

Dam Safety Office, D-6600

1. Emergency Management Policy.

- A. All Reclamation Area and Regional Offices will implement an emergency management program to address all potential emergency incidents at our facilities that could reasonably affect the safety of the general public or environmental resources (e.g., incidents at high and significant hazard dams). It is acknowledged that a number of emergency management program requirements and activities, as contained herein and in the Emergency Management Directives, are presently being accomplished. Regional Offices should provide coordination and oversight of these activities and, along with the Technical Service Center, provide technical assistance and support as needed. Initially, nonreimbursable funding was provided from the Program Analysis Office's Associated Operation and Maintenance Budget but in fiscal year 1997 and beyond, funding will be programmed at a high priority level by the Regional and responsible Area Offices to ensure accomplishment of these directed activities.

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- B. It is not within Reclamation's authority or responsibility to directly carry out warning and evacuation of the impacted public from large operational or spillway releases, or from dam failure floods. However, Reclamation has the responsibility to take reasonable and prudent actions necessary to provide for the public safety downstream from our dams.
- C. An emergency management program will comply with applicable provisions of the Department of the Interior – Departmental Manual Part 753 (or subsequent replacement documents) relative to dam safety-related emergency management. The emergency management programs for dams will be managed according to the appropriate Emergency Management Directives in the specific areas of Emergency Action Plans (EAP), inundation mapping, exercising and personnel training, downstream warning and evacuation, and information database. These directives are considered the minimum necessary for an effective emergency management program; for many dams or facilities, additional measures may be appropriate.
- D. For dams identified as having hydrologic deficiencies, early warning systems (EWS) have been implemented or are planned to provide timely public warning of life-threatening operational releases or dam failure to facilitate a safe evacuation. These systems will be included as part of emergency management programs. To ensure effective and consistent Reclamation-wide application of EWS's, the associated Early Warning System Directives are applicable to all dams where an EWS is to be implemented. The directives apply whether the EWS is a nonstructural alternative to a dam safety deficiency or a measure to effectively warn the downstream public of life-threatening operational releases. Safety of Dams funding will be made available for the design and implementation of an EWS to mitigate dam safety deficiencies including: preparation of EAP revisions, preparation of inundation mapping (if determined necessary), initial exercises, and coordination with local emergency management officials. Where Safety of Dams funding is used, appropriate reimbursement of costs will be obtained as required in the authorizing Safety of Dams legislation.
- E. Early warning systems (EWS) will address life-threatening operational releases from dams and potential dam failures. For an EWS to effectively protect the downstream public, all of the components must be in place and fully integrated.
- F. For other hazards that could impact dams and other such facilities, appropriate provisions of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), Oil Prevention Act (OPA), and the Clean Water Act will be used in addressing needed emergency management responsibilities. In addition, all dams and facilities having hazardous chemicals in storage will be in compliance with Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) Title III. The Environmental Protection

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Agency has published extensive regulations concerning implementation and compliance with these Acts. Hazardous Materials Directives provide an overview and listing of the specific portions of the regulations applicable to Reclamation's emergency management responsibilities associated with these Acts.

2. Definitions.

- A. **Emergency Management Program.** The system or group of actions (referred to as a "program" in these policy and directives) by which mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery activities are undertaken within Reclamation to save lives and protect property impacted by emergency incidents at our facilities. An emergency incident is a condition of a serious nature which develops unexpectedly or is beyond our control and endangers the structural integrity of the dam and/or endangers downstream property and human life, thereby, requiring immediate response actions. Such an incident, in essentially all cases, requires the notification of and involvement with downstream jurisdictions and other Federal and State agencies.
- B. **Emergency Action Plan (EAP).** Reclamation's emergency action procedures for management and dam operating personnel to follow during an emergency incident or unusual occurrence at a given dam to reduce potential for loss of life and property damage and to provide proper notification to downstream authorities. It also assists operational personnel in deciding on and implementing actions to prepare for a variety of emergency incidents.
- C. **Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) (State and Local).** The local jurisdiction's plan for issuing warnings to the public and evacuating impacted public to a safe location for various emergency events. Emergency operations plans are multihazard, functional plans that treat emergency management activities generically. This plan is often called a local emergency operations plan (LEOP).
- D. **Dam-Specific Warning and Evacuation Plan (also called dam-specific EOP, annex, or stand-alone warning and evacuation plan).** The local jurisdiction's emergency response plan which describes how the local jurisdiction will effectively carry out a warning and evacuation of the impacted population for incidents at a specific dam. It contains specific information about the upstream dam or dams posing a threat to the population. The plans for jurisdictions included in an EWS will satisfy the two required downstream components of the EWS (warning and evacuation) if they are fully integrated with the other components of the EWS (detection, decisionmaking, and notification). Plan capabilities are evaluated through participation in tabletop or functional exercises. A downstream jurisdiction's plan must be properly linked to the corresponding notification procedures in Reclamation's EAP.

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- E. **Public Safety.** The protection of human life and related personal property resulting from proactive measures to mitigate potential adverse impacts caused by external incidents or actions.
- F. **Early Warning Systems (EWS).** A designed system that will ensure timely recognition of a threatening event, resulting in a reliable and timely warning and evacuation of the population at risk from dangerous flooding associated with large operational releases or dam failure. The designed system must address all five components including detection, decisionmaking, notification, warning, and evacuation.
- (1) **Detection.** Processes and equipment necessary to collect information about the threatening event and the response of the dam and reservoir, and relay that information to the decisionmakers.
 - (2) **Decisionmaking.** Processes and facilities necessary to translate incoming data about the threatening event and structural response into decisions to alert or warn the appropriate downstream authorities.
 - (3) **Notification.** Communicating alerts and warnings about an emergency condition at a dam to appropriate local officials so they can take proper action(s).
 - (4) **Warning.** The processes (including the media) and equipment necessary to make the public aware of potential, probable, or imminent danger or risk. A warning should be designed to prompt the population at risk to take protective action.
 - (5) **Evacuation.** The plans, personnel, equipment, and facilities needed to move the population at risk to safety. It involves taking protective actions to leave an area of risk until the hazard has passed and the area is safe for return.