

A tall, dark silhouette of a water tower stands on the right side of the frame. The background is a vibrant sunset sky with a gradient from light blue at the top to deep orange and red at the bottom. The water tower has a rounded top and a lattice-like structure on its sides. The overall scene is serene and evokes a sense of community and utility.

# **MUTUAL AID WARN AGREEMENT**

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**Columbia County**  
**Water Utility**

# HURRICANE DORIAN 2019

- Hit Bahamas Sept 1 – 2 as Category 5
- 67 dead; 282 missing
- 29,500 homeless
- \$3.4 billion in damages





# HURRICANE DORIAN 2019

Aquifer contaminated

There's nothing. You can't buy water.

**Residents advised not to  
drink or use the tap water**

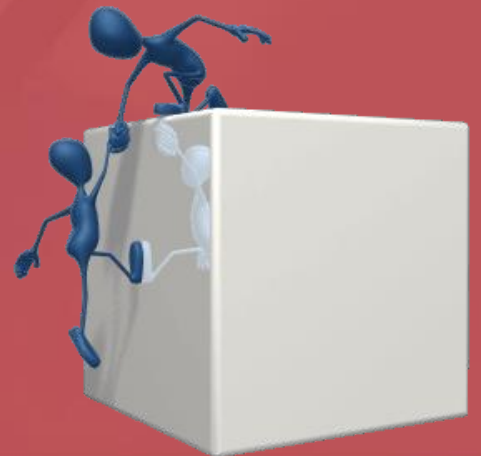
Thousands will need water for weeks

**200 wells unusable**

knocked out power, water, communications,  
and sewage service

# MUTUAL AID

- How can we help?
- Overview of existing mutual aid groups
  - Operators Without Borders
  - WARN
- Tribal mutual aid agreement
  - Breakout brainstorming session
  - Brief report-outs



# OPERATORS WITHOUT BORDERS

- Operators Without Borders is a registered Canadian non-profit non-governmental organization
- Formed in 2017 in response to Hurricanes Irma and Maria
- Presently more than 50 certified Operators have signed up to volunteer



# WHAT DOES OWB DO?

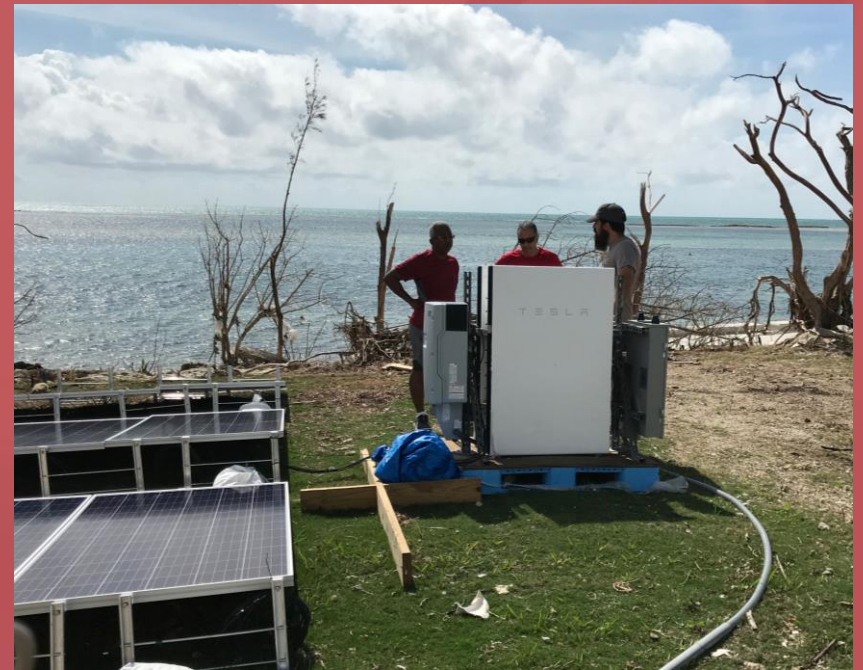
- Disaster relief
  - Not first responders
  - Deploy once there is equipment and accommodation
  - Work with other Caribbean organizations to help rebuild utilities after disasters
- Training and mentoring
- Assessment of utility operations



# DISASTER RELIEF – DOMINICA – MARIA, 2017



# DISASTER RELIEF – DOMINICA – MARIA, 2017





# WARN

- Facilitated by USEPA
- Water and Wastewater Agency Response Networks
- Comprised of ‘utilities helping utilities’ within a state respond to and recover from emergencies by sharing resources with one another



# WARN

- Governed by a common mutual aid agreement
- Allows utilities to share resources in a more expedited way, compared to other mechanisms that require a formal disaster declaration



# WAYNESBORO, GA

- Population ~6,000
- Area: 5.5 square miles
- Contractor accidentally pulled a service line, ripping a six foot long split in the primary water main at 9 pm.
- Results
  - No water for 24 hours
    - Drained the tanks
  - Boil water advisory
  - Schools closed
  - Businesses closed



1                                   **Model Mutual Aid and Assistance Agreement for Intrastate**  
2                                   **Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (WARN)**  
3

4     *This Model Agreement contains procedures and standards for a water and wastewater utility*  
5     *Mutual Aid and Assistance Program. The Model is based on existing water and wastewater*  
6     *utility Mutual Aid and Assistance agreements implemented in California, Florida, Texas,*  
7     *Louisiana, South Carolina, Oregon, Georgia, and Pennsylvania. While the Model shares some*  
8     *similarities with each of the eight agreements, it is a unique document in and of itself.*  
9

10    *Creating an agreement for Mutual Aid and Assistance involves a number of policy decisions.*  
11    *The Model Agreement proposes specific approaches to Mutual Aid and Assistance Program*  
12    *issues; however, reasonable minds will differ as to whether the approaches presented in the*  
13    *model are the best. Accordingly, notes are included for each provision of the Model Agreement.*  
14    *These notes highlight significant issues that arise in the drafting of a mutual aid and assistance*  
15    *Program and how the Model Agreement approaches those issues. The notes also explain why*  
16    *certain provisions are included in the Model Agreement.*  
17

18    *Representatives of the water and wastewater industry can use this Model Agreement as a tool*  
19    *to facilitate discussion on drafting an Intrastate Mutual Aid and Assistance agreement that best*  
20    *illustrates their needs. However, while each intrastate steering committee may revise portions of*  
21    *this Agreement, it is important to note that this Model Agreement allows for inclusion and*  
22    *eventual connection with a national interstate mutual aid and assistance agreement. Because*  
23    *mutual aid and assistance programs require standardized operational procedures, consistency*  
24    *between the intrastate agreements is critical. Thus, major modifications to this Agreement*  
25    *would preclude using it for connection with an interstate program for mutual aid and assistance*  
26    *program.*  
27

28                                   **AGREEMENT**  
29

30    This Agreement is made and entered into by public and private Water and Wastewater Utilities  
31    that have, by executing this Agreement, manifested their intent to participate in an Intrastate  
32    Program for Mutual Aid and Assistance.  
33

34    Statutory Authority – (cite authorizing state statute, if any) This Agreement is authorized under  
35    Section XXX of the (state revised statutes on mutual aid) which provides that Water and  
36    Wastewater Utilities may contract with each other to provide services.

# MISCONCEPTIONS

<b>Misconception</b>	<b>Truth</b>
WARN is geared toward large systems.	Public, private, and sovereign Tribal systems of all sizes have equal rights in WARN.
WARN membership is too expensive.	Existing WARNs do not require a membership or retainer fee. All member utilities volunteer time to develop and maintain their WARN.
WARN members are obligated to respond and send resources	No member is obligated to send resources if they decide not to for any reason.

# BREAKOUT WORK SESSION

- Edit the EPA Model WARN Agreement
- Divide into groups
- Each group will start in a different section
  - What will work best for USET?
  - How will this agreement help expedite mutual aid while protecting those involved?
- Report out by each group
  - What will it take for this to work?
  - Are there challenges to overcome?



# REPORT OUT

- 3 – 5 min per table
- Answer these questions:
  - What will it take for this to work?
  - Are there challenges to overcome?

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