

TABLETOP EXERCISE TOOL FOR WATER SYSTEMS: Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Climate Resiliency

BACKGROUND

In January 2005, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Office of Ground Water and Drinking Water released a CD-ROM-based tool to assist drinking water and wastewater utilities and their partners and stakeholders (e.g., the water sector) in planning and conducting tabletop exercises. The EPA has since developed an enhanced tool that incorporates an all-hazards approach to emergency management consistent with the current state of knowledge within the water sector.

The enhanced tool, titled *Tabletop Exercise Tool for Water Systems: Emergency Preparedness, Response, and Climate Resiliency (TTX Tool)*, includes fully-customizable materials users can modify, allowing them to conduct a tabletop exercise to meet their specific needs.

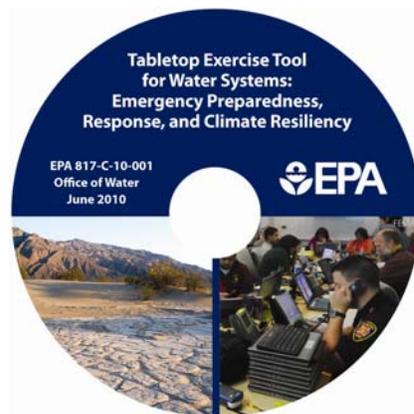
PURPOSE

The new TTX Tool is designed to provide the water sector with the necessary resources to plan, conduct, and evaluate tabletop exercises. Tabletop exercises allow water systems to practice, test, and improve emergency response plans (ERPs) and procedures. The TTX Tool simplifies the process of planning and conducting tabletop exercises, and provides resources that aid in the development of customized scenario-driven, discussion-based tabletop exercises.

ENHANCEMENTS

The fifteen scenarios in the TTX Tool address an all-hazards approach to emergency preparedness and response as well as introduce users to the potential impacts of climate change on the water sector. Each scenario contains potential impacts and discussion questions specific to both drinking water and wastewater utilities and also encourages coordination with other organizations that may be involved in the response to a water sector incident. All materials are designed to be consistent with the guidance and terminology of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP).

New training resources assist even the most novice exercise planners and facilitators in designing and executing a successful tabletop exercise. Training resources found on the TTX Tool include presentations that demonstrate how to use the TTX tool as well as presentations on how to plan, customize, conduct, and evaluate an exercise. Additionally, the tool contains informational presentations covering current water sector-related initiatives, such as Water/Wastewater Agency Response Networks (WARNs) and the Incident Command System (ICS). Reference documents and links to relevant Web sites are also included. The resources on the tool equip exercise planners with the information they need to customize an exercise to meet their specific objectives.



FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Email: ttxtool@epa.gov or visit: <http://www.epa.gov/watersecurity>.