Key Assumptions

1. **Members have signed the OnWARN Agreement.** The OnWARN Agreement establishes the foundation of OnWARN and serves as the legal instrument authorizing the request for mutual aid / assistance, provides a mechanism for reimbursement, identifies the legal protection and immunities for employees and for use of resources.

2. **Emergency Response Plans (ERPs) are in place.** OnWARN encourages Members to develop and update their own ERP.

3. **Pre-emergency responsibilities for Members are addressed:**
   
   A. Identify an Authorized Official and alternates who are responsible for the following:
      
      - Requesting assistance;
      - Offering assistance; or
      - Withdrawing assistance under the agreement.

   B. Update annually or when changes occur:
      
      - Contact information for their Authorized Official and alternates; including 24-hour access (e.g. after-hours number) and provide to the OnWARN Steering Committee; and
      - Own resource information that may be available for mutual aid and assistance response.

   C. Include in the ERP the following procedures describing:
      
      - How or when the Authorized Official may request or send mutual aid / assistance;
      - Reporting and coordination with the local emergency management officials;
      - How to track costs for personnel, equipment, and other resources during an emergency;
      - Printing a hard copy of the OnWARN contact list on a periodic basis (e.g. every six months) to ensure the information is available when a power loss disrupts computer access;
      - Employee training and exercise plan on the Member’s ERP. Emergency Response Exercises may be *tabletop* (discussion-based), *functional* (simulation) or *full-scale* (operational).

   D. OnWARN support:
      
      - Volunteer to be an active member of the OnWARN Steering Committee, as available; and
      - Support staff attendance at OnWARN Emergency Response training, exercises and/or general meetings.
OnWARN Operational Plan

OnWARN Activation – Appendix “A” describes the OnWARN Activation and Communication procedure.

Pre-Event Activation - Some types of emergencies (e.g. severe storms or hurricanes) can be characterized as “warning” or “notice” events due to a build-up of intensity over time and/or scientific methods of predicting an event. This type of event allows Members to anticipate the magnitude of damage and therefore response needs. Activating prior to the disaster opens the lines of communication and coordination among Members which helps to ensure a timely and proactive response. The Requesting Member can initiate the following activities:

- Notify Members of the expected conditions;
- Maintain contact with Members about changing conditions and information;
- Receive requested resources and identify follow-up actions.

Notification – occurs when a Requesting Member notifies that they need resources. The OnWARN Activation Form (Appendix “B”) prompts the Requesting Member to include required information in the notification. Initial communication occurs via e-mail, a phone call, website or other methods. Verbal notifications between Requesting and Responding Members are confirmed via written communication (on the OnWARN Activation Form). The Member requesting mutual aid / assistance gathers and documents the following information:

- Type of incident;
- Impact on Member;
- Number of agencies in response;
- Known limitations or restrictions;
- Available communication tools.

In all cases in which the OnWARN Agreement is activated, participating Members notify the OnWARN Steering Committee via e-mail (info@onwarn.org) or telephone to the OnWARN Chair that the request has been made and met with resources from another member.

Response to a Request for Assistance – A Member is not obligated to respond to a request. Once a Member receives a request for assistance, the Authorized Official evaluates whether or not to respond. The Authorized Official considers these questions:

- Does my utility have the resource requested?
- Do the resources meet the operational requirements that the Requesting Member identified?
- Did this event impact normal operation?
- If we provide resources, can we maintain our ability to respond to unanticipated needs?

If the Authorized Official determines that resources are available to respond to the Requesting Member, the Member is then referred to as a Responding Member. The Authorized Official of the Responding Member communicates, as soon as possible, with the Requesting Member that it is available to respond and provides the approximate arrival time of such assistance. When possible, the Authorized Officials of both the Requesting and Responding Members will confirm all verbal agreements with written documentation (fax or e-mail).

In addition, the Authorizing Officials will clarify and agree upon the following items:

- Requesting Member’s ability to provide food, sleeping arrangements, first aid, etc. for personnel and resources;
- Reimbursement process to determine whether the Responding Member follows the reimbursement article of the OnWARN Agreement; and
- What aid the Responding Member can provide, the cost, and confirmation of the approval from the Authorized Official and the Member’s management to provide aid.

If agreement is reached on the above items, the Authorized Officials will complete and transmit the authorization in writing.

After Action Report - After an exercise or an incident, all OnWARN Members involved with the mutual aid/assistance response are encouraged to meet and complete an After Action Report and consider creating an Improvement Plan. It is recommended that all key players and groups involved in the response and recovery provide input. Therefore, if the incident is small and only involves a small number of OnWARN Members, the affected Member may complete the After Action Report (Appendix “C”). If the incident is large and involves many jurisdictions, the OnWARN Steering Committee may coordinate the after action review and report process.
Response Considerations

**Requesting Member** – responsible for the following tasks:
- Determine how to describe the resources required and which Members can potentially meet that need.
- Discuss resource needs and conditions of use with potential Responding Members.
- After the Responding Member(s) confirms available resources and estimated costs; review and determine whether to accept this mutual aid/assistance proposal.
- Provide status updates to the OnWARN Steering Committee so that OnWARN Members are aware that needs are met or not.
- Assign a Mutual Aid Coordinator to address care, feeding, and other support for incoming mutual aid personnel.
- Notify local emergency management coordinating partners of the incoming mutual aid.
- Identify a Staging Area and assign a Staging Area Manager for incoming mutual aid.
- Identify work assignments for the incoming mutual aid.
- Consider how to integrate incoming mutual aid resources with existing workforce.
- Develop a demobilization plan that includes protocols on how and when mutual aid resources will be released.

**Responding Member** – is responsible to complete the following tasks:
- Contact the Requesting Member to notify them of available resources.
- If mutual aid/assistance is requested, review and determine whether it can meet this request.
- Estimate the cost of response. These costs will then be reported to the Requesting Member for consideration.
- Identify supervisors and staff to send to the Requesting Member’s emergency, and consider which employees can adapt to the environment of the incident (consider physical and mental health impacts).
- Develop an internal Communications Plan between supervisors of the responding teams and the Responding Member.
- Conduct a pre-deployment briefing with all responding team staff. Include the following items:
  - Health and safety considerations, including but not limited to immunizations, special tools, or clothing;
  - Environmental conditions onsite;
  - Care and shelter arrangements;
  - Rules of conduct during deployment, including but not limited to, activities allowed after work hours; and
  - Review of procedures.
- Inform Requesting Member of the Responding Member’s deployment and estimated time of arrival.

**Requesting Member Demobilization** – following standard Incident Management System practices of demobilization, the Requesting Member writes a demobilization plan on how to coordinate the return of resources, including the debriefing of staff and the inspection of equipment and materials. The plan should:
- Capture personnel evaluations and identify future tactical resource needs. This would be conducted by both the Requesting Member prior to releasing the personnel, as well as by the Responding Member once its personnel are back.
- Identify release priorities and procedures. This would include internal resources, mutual aid resources, and any contracted resources.

**Responding Member Demobilization** - while preparing to demobilize and prior to leaving, the Responding Member’s team is responsible to complete the following tasks:
- Deliver documentation collected during response to the Requesting Member;
- Return any sensitive or confidential information to the Requesting Member;
- Collect all information on costs and process it through the Requesting Member’s Finance and Administration;
- Keep copies of all cost documentation for Responding Member. Information includes:
  - Injury reports;
  - Timesheets;
  - Material purchased;
  - Equipment used and duration of use.

The Responding Member will prepare appropriate invoices as described in the OnWARN Agreement.
**Definitions**

**Authorized Official** – An employee or officer of a Member who is authorized to:

1. Request assistance;
2. Offer assistance; or
3. Withdraw assistance under the Agreement.

**Confidential Information** – Any document shared with any signatory of the Agreement that is marked confidential, including but not limited to any map, report, note, paper, opinion, or e-mail which relates to the system vulnerabilities of a Member or Associate Member, and any document that is protected under the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, Emergency Management and Civil Protection Act, Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act, and Personal Health Information Protection Act, 2004.

**Emergency** – A natural or human caused event or circumstance causing, or imminently threatening to cause, loss of life, injury to person or property, human suffering or financial loss, or could reasonably be beyond the capability of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of a Member to fully manage and mitigate internally.

**Incident Management System (IMS)** – A system, consistent with internationally recommended practices, that provides standardized organizational structures, functions, processes and terminology for use at all levels of emergency response in Ontario. IMS addresses the need for coordinated responses to large-scale and complex incidents and has been developed with input from more than 30 emergency response organizations and stakeholders from Ontario.

**Member** – Any public or private water or wastewater utility, owner, or operating authority in Ontario (“Utility”) that manifests intent to participate in the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program by executing the Agreement.

1. **Requesting Member** – A Member who requests aid or assistance from another Member or Members under the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program.

2. **Responding Member** – A Member that provides aid or assistance during a Period of Assistance in response to a request for aid or assistance under the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program.

3. **Non-Responding Member** – A Member or Associate Member that does not provide aid or assistance during a Period of Assistance under the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program.

**Associate Member** – Any non-Utility participant, approved by the OnWARN Steering Committee, that provides a support role for the Mutual Aid and Assistance Program. (For example: any non–Utility agency or association that does not officially sign the Agreement). An Associate Member is not entitled to vote on any matter as outlined and identified in the Agreement.

**Period of Assistance** – A specified period of time when a Responding Member assists a Requesting Member. The period commences when personnel, equipment, or supplies depart from Responding Member’s facility and ends when the resources return to their facility (portal to portal). All protections identified in the Agreement apply during this period. The specified Period of Assistance may occur during response to or recovery from an Emergency, as previously defined.

**Requests for Assistance** – can be made orally or in writing. When made orally, the request for resources shall be prepared in writing as soon as practicable. Requests for assistance shall be directed to the Authorized Official of the participating Member.

**Response to a Request for Assistance** – Members are not obligated to respond to a request. After a Member receives a request for assistance, the Authorized Official evaluates whether or not to respond, whether resources are available to respond, or if other circumstances would hinder response. Following the evaluation, the Authorized Representative shall inform the Requesting Member if it will respond as soon as possible. If the Member is willing and able to provide assistance, the Responding Member shall inform the Requesting Member about the type of available resources and the approximate arrival time of such assistance.
Appendix “A” - OnWARN Activation and Communication Procedure

Incident

Major or Emergency?

Y

Notify Emergency Teams (Internal and/or Municipal)

Internal and/or Municipal Emergency Plans activated

Adequate Resources? (by Authorized Official)

N

OnWARN Activated & Communicate as appropriate

OnWARN Activated

Responders Assess Capabilities

Can Help? (by Authorized Official)

Y

Requesting and Responding Members Agree on Terms of Deployment

Period of Assistance and Control of Resources

Food and Accommodations for Responders

Responding Members Organize Resources and Deploy

Demobilization, After Action Report & Improvement Plan

N

OnWARN Notified & Communicate as appropriate

Alert / Warning (threat or severe weather)

Adequate Resources? (by Authorized Official)

N

Incident

Appendix “A” - OnWARN Activation and Communication Procedure

OnWARN Operational Plan

OnWARN Operational Plan

OnWARN Operational Plan
## OnWARN Activation Form

**Requesting Member**

**Date**

### Description of Emergency Event

### Type of Assistance
- (Equipment, Personnel*, Advice)

### Description of Assistance Requested

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Assistance</th>
<th>Description of Assistance Requested</th>
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**Assistance Required In:**
- Indicate # of hours or days in which assistance is required to start.

**Period of Assistance:**
- Indicate # of hours, days or weeks anticipated for Period of Assistance.

*Consider whether a Supervisor should accompany personnel.

### Additional Information:

### Contact:

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<tr>
<th>Name of Person to Contact</th>
<th>E-mail:</th>
<th>Phone:</th>
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**Process for requesting assistance from OnWARN Members:**

1. The Requesting Member completes all fields necessary to accurately describe the assistance requested; and all fields included in this OnWARN Activation Form.
2. The Requesting Member e-mails the completed form to OnWARN Member contact list.
3. Members able to assist Requesting Member contact the “Person to Contact” listed in the OnWARN Activation Form. Members unable to assist are asked to not respond (to avoid unduly tying up communications during event response).
4. Requesting Member and Responding Members work together to plan a response.
5. In a major event that the Requesting Member is unavailable to work with Responding Members to plan a response; the OnWARN Chair, Vice Chair or Regional Chair may assist in planning Member response.
Description of Emergency Event

What went well?

What did not go well?

What needs to be improved?

Other lessons learned?

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<tr>
<th>CA#</th>
<th>Issue Description</th>
<th>Root Cause</th>
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