

Public Communication

Overview

- 9/25 Coordination with MDE's Public Information Officer
- 9/25 Incident summary and key messages circulated to water utility PIOs
- ICPRB responded to media inquiries throughout incident
- 9/29 Washington Aqueduct & WSSC fielded media inquiries (Channel 7, WTOP, AP)
- 9/30 Potomac Conservancy posted summary to website and distributed to subscribers
- 9/30 Incident summary provided to COG Health Officials Committee

Recommendations for Spill Communications

Develop plan for coordinated communications across involved parties

- Clarify lead agency for response and external communications at incident onset
- Designate water utility communications liaison for region to interact with response agencies
- Designate a water utility spokesperson for the Lower Potomac water utilities
- Improve coordination with upstream water utilities
- Media monitoring, rumor control and messaging coordination across entities
- Identify opportunities/protocols to assist smaller utilities, including conventional and social media

Centralize incident information

- Consistent information coordination is essential for parties involved as well as the public
- Central website for incident information (public vs. internal stakeholders)
- Information should include sampling/testing plans, test results, maps, updates (at least 2 X day), FAQs, contaminant information, and contact info for utilities or organizations that respond to public inquiries
- Transparency is important to minimize the loss of public confidence in utilities and government

How should the Partnership proceed?

- What is the best way to designate roles during an emergency?
- Should ICPRB or NCR Warn host websites for public/private information?
- How do we improve coordination with upstream and smaller utilities?
- What are communication/information expectations?
- How do we ensure transparency?