In 2002, Congress passed the Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act (Public Law 107-188), commonly referred to as the Bioterrorism Act or BT Act. The BT Act required certain drinking water systems to conduct a vulnerability assessment (VA) and update or create an emergency response plan (ERP). Although wastewater systems are not currently required to comply with the BT Act, Congress is giving the matter consideration. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency strongly encourages wastewater systems to assess their vulnerabilities and use the findings to update or develop an emergency response plan.

Through interviews with real-life wastewater system operators and manager, this program reveals why it is important for wastewater systems to be prepared to handle emergencies. The program highlights:

- real life examples of security incidents at wastewater systems,
- the six basic steps of a vulnerability assessment,
- some software tools available to help small systems complete the VA and ERP,
- the core elements of an ERP, and
- the need to practice and revise the completed ERP regularly.

After viewing the program, the wastewater system should:
- know the basic steps involved in preparing a vulnerability assessment,
- know enough about a vulnerability assessment to ask informed questions if they need assistance from EPA Regional Offices, State Agencies, third party providers, or other resources,
- know the core elements of an ERP,
- understand the decision making process involved in activation of an ERP, and
- recognize the importance of practicing the ERP and keeping it updated.

Should you have any security related questions, contact EPA's Water / Wastewater Security Division at: 202-564-3779 or visit our website at: http://cfpub.epa.gov/safewater/watersecurity/index.cfm

Should you have a security related emergency,
1.   contact the local authorities by dialing 911
2.   call the National Emergency Operations Center at: 202-564-3850.

Wastewater Security:
An Operator's Perspective

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