



**SUPERCHARGE
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WaterISAC Members:

WaterISAC has worked with the EPA and water sector associations to advise the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on the distribution of donated personal protective equipment (PPE) equipment to water and wastewater utilities nationwide. Please review the following joint advisory for more information.

A workgroup was convened to provide feedback to a FEMA request for information regarding water sector PPE use and needs. The workgroup consisted of representatives from the EPA as well as the following associations: the Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies, the Association of State Drinking Water Administrators, the American Water Works Association, the National Rural Water Association, the Rural Community Assistance Partnership, the Water Environment Federation, and WaterISAC.

Upon receipt of the information, FEMA immediately offered shipment of reusable cloth masks to water and wastewater utilities. FEMA intends to send out approximately 7 million masks direct to critical infrastructure sectors (water sector is one of 16) and states. Orders will be filled each week as production catches up to the demand. FEMA has not shared how many of the 7 million masks and future orders will be allocated to the water sector or how long the distribution of masks will continue. There have been no shipments to date as FEMA determines a process for distributing to the critical infrastructure sector. FEMA is aware the water sector would prefer N95 or other types of mask for operations, but currently those remain prioritized for healthcare.

The workgroup is collaborating on the most efficient and equitable process for requesting and distributing the PPE to ensure all water and wastewater utilities (regardless of type, size, or affiliation) have an opportunity to obtain the PPE. Currently, the mask shipments are being coordinated through the Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (WARN) Chair in each

state, who will then identify utilities that are willing and able to serve as points of distribution for other utilities in the state. Requests for PPE are currently prioritized based on the number of COVID-19 cases in the state; states with more cases receive priority for requests. As masks become available, WaterISAC will notify members within these states and provide contact information for distributing utilities.

Some states have already set up a request and distribution process while others still need to work out the details. More information will be provided as request and distribution processes are determined. It is important to note that all requests should be critical need only as these are washable cloth masks that can be reused up to 15 times. As demand is expected to be higher than supply, it is recommended that masks be allocated at a rate of 2 masks per full-time employee (FTE), with priority to staff working on-site. If FEMA continues to support mask distribution, allocations per FTE can increase.

WaterISAC will share additional information about this initiative as it becomes available. Please reach out to us if you have any questions or comments.

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and for water sector professionals.