



**American Water Works
Association**

The Authoritative Resource on Safe WaterSM

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CHEMICAL FACILITY SECURITY

Recommendations: In light of the security steps the water sector has already taken to address security, AWWA can support chemical security legislation that applies to water utilities only if it:

1. Excludes Public Water Systems from any federal authority to order the use of “inherently safer technology.” Decisions concerning utility choice of disinfectant are complex, are based on critical local factors, and cannot be made from Washington, DC.
2. Excludes Public Water Systems from any authority for the federal government to order a facility to shut down. If a water or waste water utility shuts down, basic fire protection and sanitation services are lost to that community, causing significant public health and safety issues as well as economic disruption.
3. Applies to drinking water systems only if they have chemicals of concern above identified threshold quantities. Drinking water systems should not be covered by chemical security provisions solely because they are near population centers or other such factors, if they do not have chemicals of concern above critical threshold levels.

Background

While drinking water and wastewater utilities are currently exempt from chemical facility security anti-terrorism standards, known as CFATS, there is interest in Congress in ending those exemptions. Legislation authorizing CFATS expires in September of this year and reauthorizing legislation for that program is expected to include the water sector.

Drinking water and wastewater utilities have long been proactive in addressing security threats. They have been handling gaseous chlorine for more than 100 years and are well aware of what is required to safeguard this tool, from secure storage sites to scrubbers that neutralize leaks. Utilities have addressed perimeter security at treatment facilities and reservoir security for years. Utilities that use certain chemicals are already subject to risk management planning provisions under section 112(r) of the Clean Air Act; to emergency planning and community notification provisions under the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act; and to additional state and local standards for safe storage and handling of hazardous chemicals. When Congress passed the Public Health Protection and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002, which required vulnerability assessments and updates to existing emergency response plans, the water sector took those requirements several steps further and developed extensive training programs and tools for utilities.

The Water Sector Coordinating Council was formed in the fall of 2004 to enhance communications about security issues among water professionals, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Environmental Protection Agency. The Water Information Sharing and Analysis Center (WaterISAC) provides immediate, on-line sharing of threat and incident information among those institutions. The men and women who operate drinking water systems consider securing the water they treat and provide to their consumers to be an inherent and daily part of their jobs and calling.

Most states now have a Water and Wastewater Agency Response Network (WARN), a network of utilities helping other utilities to respond to and recover from emergencies. WARNs provide a method whereby water/wastewater utilities that have sustained or anticipate damages from natural or human-caused incidents can provide and receive emergency aid and assistance in the form of personnel, equipment, materials, and other associated services as necessary from other water/wastewater utilities. They provide rapid, short-term deployment of emergency services to restore the critical operations of the affected water/wastewater utility.

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