

It seems like FRWA has been in Emergency Response mode all year. The COVID 19 pandemic put us into response for Florida water utilities and helping our friends in Georgia/GRWA. FRWA delivered generators to hospitals to help run refrigeration trucks. We even bought KN 95 masks and sold them to Florida water utilities at cost for protection of critical and valuable water utilities' staff. Then hurricane season started early and we have been on alert/response ever since (More on that in the following paragraphs). FRWA has also been working very closely with, and been prime contractor, to develop an emergency response reporting/tracking/needs requesting/resource providing system with the State of Florida. Working together, Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Florida Water Agency Response Network (FlaWARN) and FRWA have developed WATER Tracker (Water Assistance Tracking & Emergency Response). Access or review of this program is available to interested parties. In fact, sharing with other States has been offered, and remains offered, to other State partners such as State Primacy Agencies and Rural Water Associations and WARNs.

Florida's storms and the daily requests from water utilities for FRWA equipment/emergency response resources including generators and pumps are common and we do not even count those as emergency response anymore. If there is an issue for water utilities that generates a request to FRWA, it is an emergency to that water utility. Some States call it providing technical assistance, but it is really emergency response in the judgement of the water utilities needing the help for a water utility emergency.

FRWA responded and pre-staged FRWA emergency response equipment at West Palm Beach for Hurricane Isaias. We had semi loads of generators and pumps ready for use. In a miracle related to normal Florida luck it turned/veered north and delivered only a glancing blow to the Florida Atlantic coast and Florida Water Utilities. In fact, the resources were not even unloaded off semi-trailers to be used. Local water utilities helped each other/took care of all needs. This is the beauty of Water Utility helping Water Utility Networks-FlaWARN.

Then Hurricane Laura hit our friends and impacted water utilities in Texas and Louisiana. Louisiana and Louisiana Rural Water Association (LRWA) needed help and we responded with FRWA resources. We took at least 20 generators and pumps, fuel trailer, FRWA travel trailer, FRWA truck and semi/crane, semi-trailers, other miscellaneous emergency response items and FRWA staff to help. Even while resources remained and FRWA continued to help LRWA, Hurricane Sally hit parts of the western panhandle of Florida. Many resources that had cleared in Louisiana were recovered by the FRWA semi and trailer for Sally response. Some resources still remain in Louisiana in use and some returned for FRWA to recover and redeploy. The remaining FRWA equipment-25 generators and other emergency response equipment was deployed from the FRWA warehouse on another semi-trailer and flatbed pulled to water utilities impacted by Sally. All needs have been met with water utilities in Florida and some equipment has been returned and some remains in use or in the logistics queue for FRWA to get back to the FRWA warehouse. Hopefully FRWA and Florida are done for the year, but there is a month and half of the hurricane season still to go. If we have to go out again we hope the resources are back long enough to service and address any issues from a month of use. The Rural Water Family has really pulled together, helped each other in the SE US, showed great leadership, helped countless water utilities, and more importantly, their customers and public. FRWA is extremely proud of and happy to have served a small role in the responses so far this year.