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# Journal

 American Water Works Association

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## Cross-Sector Emergency Planning for Water Providers and Healthcare Facilities (PDF)

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### ABSTRACT

Interruption of water supply during natural disasters or other emergencies can severely compromise operation of healthcare facilities, as demonstrated by hospitals' experiences in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Although accredited and equipped with emergency plans, many hospitals are ill-prepared to meet their water supply needs during a crisis. A first step in effective planning for emergency water supplies is an audit of the healthcare facility to quantify water use and classify individual uses as essential for critical functions versus those needed for normal operation. The hospital will then have a better understanding of its core water requirements during an emergency. This work, part of a larger study to develop implementable operational plans should the public water distribution network fail, underscores the key role played by water utilities in these efforts. Water professionals can best serve their communities by reaching out to their local emergency management agencies and hospital associations and work with them to create successful and cost-effective emergency plans.