Getting Real with Your Pool's Business Continuity Plan

Presented to:

AGRiP Governance Conference – March 4, 2020

The AWC – This is us

Serving 281 cities & towns through advocacy, education & services

Risk Management Service Agency

- Property & Liability
- 98 Members
- $8.9 M annual contributions
- 6 staff

Worker's Comp Retro Program

- Work comp & loss prevention
- 124 Members
- 1.5 M operating budget
- 5 staff

Employee Benefit Trust

- Medical, dental, vision, life, LTD, EAP, Wellness
- 275 member employers - 36,000 covered lives
- $234 M annual contributions
- 10 staff

AWC Drug & Alcohol Consortium

- U.S. DOT & Drug-Free Workplace Act compliance
- 144 members
- $187,000 operating budget
- 1.5 staff

AWC ASSOCIATION OF WASHINGTON CITIES

We have a plan. We're ready.

On paper, we checked all the boxes

Met AGRiP Advisory Standards of Business Continuity

- ✓Written policy & procedures
- ✓Identified resources, supplies, alternate location
- ✓Data recovery & accessibility plan
- ✓Contracted vendor (Agility) for business continuity
- ✓Contact information for staff, members, vendors & Board
- ✓Reviewed annually by management
- ✓Emergency response plan, training & regular drills

It’s a plan, but are we really ready?

An ad hoc committee is born

- Cross functional representation
- Get acquainted with existing policies, procedures & resources
- Evaluate gaps
- Break away into program or team level discussions
- Compile what we learned
- Outcome:
  - Revised policies, procedures & resources
  - To better coordinate a response at an enterprise level
  - Organization-wide visibility & improved confidence level by ALL staff of their responsibility during an emergency

Low hanging fruit

While waiting for teams to meet…

- Update contact lists to include work and personal cell phones for all staff
- Re-establish communications with contracted vendor
- Test communication system
- Make changes, if needed

This is NOT a test. I repeat. THIS IS NOT A TEST!

Snowmageddon 2019: 1-3 feet of snow in 3 successive storms

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Teamwork

Share current policies, procedures & resources

Business Continuity Workbook

Identify critical services

Critical response staff

Critical resources needed

Communications

Recovery process

Broad scope of emergencies:

Natural disaster

Technological

Human caused (adversarial)

Role playing

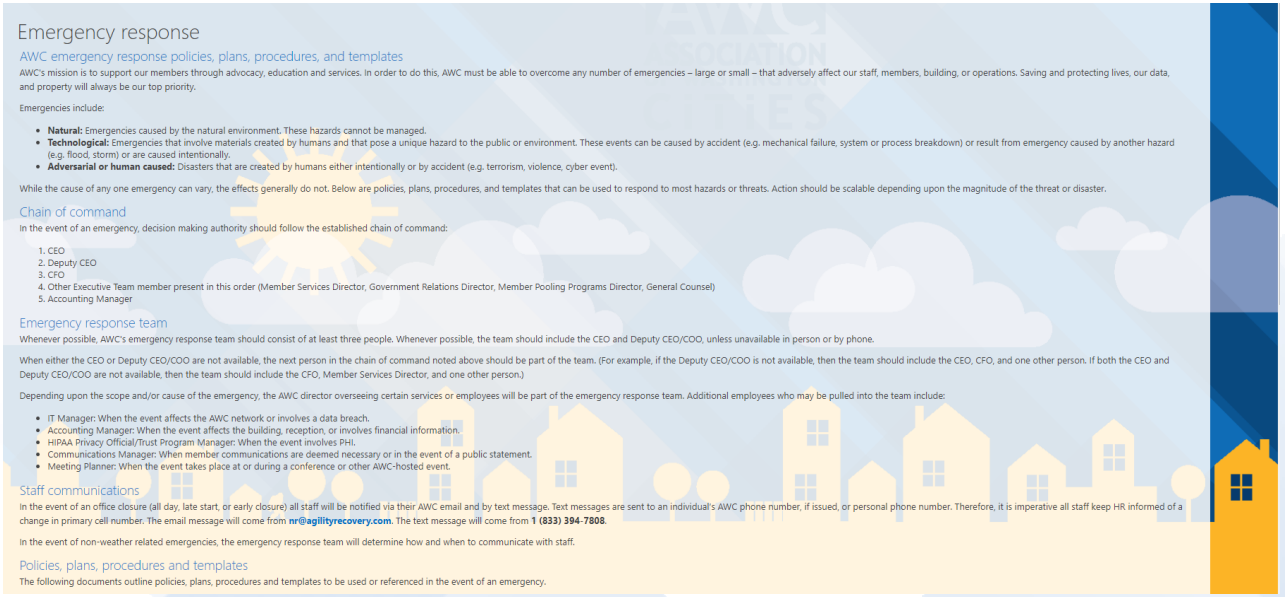
Stretch the imagination with real life scenarios

Be warned – it can get real

- Real conversations about worst case emergency scenarios were riveting
- Not everyone is comfortable in the role of primary response – good to know in advance
- Are families prepared for their loved ones being the primary responder?
- What can we do as an organization to help designated employees prepare themselves & their family for that possibility?

Updated policy & procedures

- Less clinical, more humanistic
- Relatable, tangible to all staff
- Goal for all staff to feel confident in their role in any given emergency



Emergency response

AWC emergency response policies, plans, procedures, and templates

AWC's mission is to support our members through advocacy, education and services. In order to do this, AWC must be able to overcome any number of emergencies – large or small – that adversely affect our staff, members, building, or operations. Saving and protecting lives, our data, and property will always be our top priority.

Emergencies include:

- **Natural:** Emergencies caused by the natural environment. These hazards cannot be managed.
- **Technological:** Emergencies that involve materials created by humans and that pose a unique hazard to the public or environment. These events can be caused by accident (e.g. mechanical failure, system or process breakdown) or result from emergency caused by another hazard (e.g. flood, storm) or are caused intentionally.
- **Adversarial or human caused:** Disasters that are created by humans either intentionally or by accident (e.g. terrorism, violence, cyber event).

While the cause of any one emergency can vary, the effects generally do not. Below are policies, plans, procedures, and templates that can be used to respond to most hazards or threats. Action should be scalable depending upon the magnitude of the threat or disaster.

Chain of command

In the event of an emergency, decision making authority should follow the established chain of command:

1. CEO
2. Deputy CEO
3. CFO
4. Other Executive Team member present in this order (Member Services Director, Government Relations Director, Member Pooling Programs Director, General Counsel)
5. Accounting Manager

Emergency response team

Whenever possible, AWC's emergency response team should consist of at least three people. Whenever possible, the team should include the CEO and Deputy CEO/COO, unless unavailable in person or by phone.

When either the CEO or Deputy CEO/COO are not available, the next person in the chain of command noted above should be part of the team. (For example, if the Deputy CEO/COO is not available, then the team should include the CEO, CFO, and one other person. If both the CEO and Deputy CEO/COO are not available, then the team should include the CFO, Member Services Director, and one other person.)

Depending upon the scope and/or cause of the emergency, the AWC director overseeing certain services or employees will be part of the emergency response team. Additional employees who may be pulled into the team include:

- IT Manager: When the event affects the AWC network or involves a data breach.
- Accounting Manager: When the event affects the building, reception, or involves financial information.
- HIPAA Privacy Official/Trust Program Manager: When the event involves PHI.
- Communications Manager: When member communications are deemed necessary or in the event of a public statement.
- Meeting Planner: When the event takes place at or during a conference or other AWC-hosted event.

Staff communications

In the event of an office closure (all day, late start, or early closure) all staff will be notified via their AWC email and by text message. Text messages are sent to an individual's AWC phone number, if issued, or personal phone number. Therefore, it is imperative all staff keep HR informed of a change in primary cell number. The email message will come from **nr@agilityrecovery.com**. The text message will come from **1 (833) 394-7808**.

In the event of non-weather related emergencies, the emergency response team will determine how and when to communicate with staff.

Policies, plans, procedures and templates

The following documents outline policies, plans, procedures and templates to be used or referenced in the event of an emergency.

Surprising outcomes & impacts

- Seasons matter – various departments have seasonal workloads and priorities. This affected our response plan
- Advance prep of plug-n-play communication pieces for various emergencies could save on stress at time of incident
- IT & HR changes to address critical staff
- Change in daily habits to bring laptops home every night
- More confidence & awareness building-wide of emergency readiness

We have a plan.
We're readier than we were.
We have more to learn.

Questions/comments are welcome!

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