

HURRICANE HARVEY EXPERIENCE IN BEAUMONT

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Abstract

The City of Beaumont’s Water Utilities Department used quick thinking and unconventional ideas to adapt to the challenges of Tropical Storm Harvey. Failure of backup plans, lack of access to resources, complicated regulatory regulations, pressure to quickly restore safe and reliable water services, and diverse secondary emergencies combined to demand unique solutions. These solutions will affect all future aspects of utility preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation plans. Lessons learned include the fact that disaster response plans crafted after previous hurricanes can quickly become obsolete.

Learning Objectives:

1. The importance of developing a backup plan for when your backup fails.
2. The importance of building relationships among diverse entities prior to a major disaster.
3. The value of leveraging relationships to respond as a community to a major disaster.