**Communicating with Susceptible Populations Worksheet**

**PURPOSE**

Advisories and risk communication plans must consider the needs of specific populations who may be sensitive to water quality issues or who have communication barriers, such as limited English proficiency or limited vision.

The advisory network is critical for reaching these populations. Regulations and public expectations for outreach require collaboration with public health departments and other local agencies, including schools and community organizations.

**DIRECTIONS**

Use the contact list or database to identify, list, and note contacts for public health, local government agencies, and community organizations to help with outreach to susceptible populations.

* Complete this form with public health, local agencies, and community partners.
* Include responsibilities and a time frame for developing materials and taking actions. Review the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR) Guidance (see **Appendix C: Online Resources, Susceptible Populations**). 
* Include completed contact lists in emergency response plans (ERPs) and standard operating procedures (SOPs).
* Adapt them to reflect specific needs in a community. Some strategies may work for several populations. Include a schedule for updates. Add identified facilities to the water system’s critical customer list.

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###### Low Literacy

* Encourage television news stations to announce advisory and contact phone numbers in addition to posting them on screen. Follow up with press releases.
* Use radio to distribute information. Radio is a key accessible source of information.
* Identify and coordinate with local organizations that serve low literacy populations and can help disseminate drinking water advisories in appropriate formats.
* List resources, specific messages, and materials needed to communicate with this population group.

###### Limited English Proficiency

* Identify languages widely spoken in the area. See [**https://apps.mla.org/map\_main**](https://apps.mla.org/map_main) or [**www.census.gov**](http://www.census.gov/).
* Determine local government and agency translation services and providers.
* Consider contracting for professional translation services.
* Work with public health, local government, and schools to identify, coordinate, and contract with skilled translators in the community.
* Use ethnic media outlets.
* List resources, specific messages, and materials needed to communicate with this population group.

###### Blind or Visually Impaired

* Work with social services and local government to identify organizations and communication options that serve people who are blind or visually impaired. Consider how a boil water advisory could be tailored for this audience.
* Use radio to distribute information. Radio is a key accessible source of information.
* Encourage television stations to announce advisories and contact numbers.
* Identify formats and tools to make written materials and web pages accessible for this audience.
* List resources, specific messages, and materials needed to communicate with this population group.

###### Deaf or Hard of Hearing

* Coordinate with local government, schools, and other agencies on policies for interpretation and resources.
* Encourage television news stations to broadcast all drinking water advisory information in open caption format and in their on-screen scrolls.
* Identify, coordinate, and contract with a sign language interpreter for news conferences in public forums and other events.
* Use automated messages in text and e-mail formats. They are a good method of distribution for this audience.
* Check with water system and local government on capacity to handle calls through Video Relay Service.
* List resources, specific messages, and materials needed to communicate with this population group.

###### Older Adults and Frail Elderly

* Work with public health, local government agencies, and community organizations to identify nursing homes, agencies, and organizations that assist older adults to help disseminate drinking water advisory information.
* Design messages with a clear alternative to boiling water. Boiling water may not be an option for this population.
* Identify resources, such as home healthcare, to help older adults and the elderly with support services during an emergency.
* Add meal delivery services, such as Meals on Wheels, to critical customer lists.
* List resources, specific messages, and materials needed to communicate with this population group.

**Children**

* Identify and coordinate with local health departments, school districts, pediatrician offices and clinics, and other agencies to disseminate drinking water advisory information.
* Target materials and messages to parents and teachers. Visual cues, such as posters or covering water fountains, will assist this group.
* List resources, specific messages, and materials needed to communicate with this population group.

###### Pregnant Women

* Identify and coordinate with local health departments, health clinics, hospitals, other healthcare facilities, obstetrician offices, and schools to disseminate drinking water advisory information relevant to pregnant women.
* List resources, specific messages, and materials needed to communicate with this population group.

###### Physically and Mentally Impaired

* Work with public health and local government agencies to identify community organizations, such as independent living facilities and home healthcare, which assist people with physical and mental impairments to help disseminate drinking water advisories.
* Consider targeting messages both to care providers and to individuals.
* List resources, specific messages, and materials needed to communicate with this population group.

###### Homeless

* Identify locations where drinking water advisories can be posted (e.g., libraries, shelters, soup kitchens).
* Add homeless shelters and meal centers/food banks to critical customer lists.
* Design messages with a clear alternative to boiling water. Boiling water may not be an option for this population.
* List resources, specific messages, and materials needed to communicate with this population group.

###### People with Compromised Immune Systems

* Work with the local public health department to identify and coordinate with medical facilities, healthcare providers, and organizations that serve people with compromised immune systems to disseminate drinking water advisories.
* List resources, specific messages, and materials needed to communicate with this population group.