

MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT FOR WATER/WASTEWATER

ARTICLE I. PURPOSE

The Water/Wastewater Mutual Aid Program was established to provide a method whereby water/wastewater utilities sustaining physical damage from natural or man-made disasters could obtain emergency assistance, in the form of personnel, equipment, and materials and other associated services necessary, from other water/wastewater utilities. The purpose of this Agreement is to formally document such program.

ARTICLE II. DEFINITIONS

- A. AGREEMENT – The Water/Wastewater Mutual Aid Agreement. The original agreement and all signatory pages shall be kept at TREEO Center 3900 SW 63rd Blvd., Gainesville, FL 32608
- B. PARTICIPATING UTILITY – Any Water/Wastewater utility which executes this Mutual Aid Agreement.
- C. DAMAGED UTILITY – Any Participating Utility which sustains physical damage to its water/ wastewater system due to a natural or manmade disaster and seeks assistance pursuant to this Agreement.
- D. ASSISTING UTILITY – Any Participating Utility which agrees to provide assistance to a Damaged Utility pursuant to this Agreement.
- E. AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE – An employee of a Participating Utility authorized by that utility's governing board to request or offer assistance under the terms of this Agreement. (A list of the Authorized Representatives for each Participating Utility shall be attached to this Agreement as Appendix A)
- F. PERIOD OF ASSISTANCE – The period of time beginning with the departure of any personnel of the Assisting Utility from any point for the purpose of travelling to the Damaged Utility in order to provide assistance and ending upon the return of all personnel of the Assisting Utility, after

providing the assistance requested, to their residence or place of Work, whichever is first to occur.

- G. SCHEDULE OF EQUIPMENT RATES – The latest rates published by Federal Emergency Management Agency under the response and recovery directorate applicable to major disasters and emergencies.
- H. WORK OR WORK-RELATED PERIOD – Any period of time in which either the personnel or equipment of the Assisting Utility are being used by the Damaged Utility to provide assistance. Specifically included within such period of time are rest breaks when the personnel of the Assisting Utility will return to active Work within a reasonable time. Also, included is mutually agreed upon rotation of personnel and equipment.

ARTICLE III. PROCEDURE

In the event that a particular utility becomes a Damaged Utility, the following procedure shall be followed:

- A. The Damaged Utility shall contact the Authorized Representative of one or more of the participating utilities and provide them with the following information:
 - 1. a general description of the damage sustained.
 - 2. the part of the water/wastewater system for which assistance is needed.
 - 3. the amount and type of personnel, equipment, materials and supplies needed and a reasonable estimate of the length of time they will be needed.
 - 4. the present weather conditions and the forecast for the next twenty-four hours; and
 - 5. a specific time and place for a representative of the Damaged Utility to meet the personnel and equipment of the Assisting Utility.
 - 6. The identification of Work conditions and special constraints such as availability of fuel supplies, lodging/meal support, medical facilities, security, communications, etc.

- B. When contacted by a Damaged Utility, the Authorized Representative of a Participating Utility shall assess his utility's situation to determine whether it is capable of providing assistance. No Participating Utility shall be under any obligation to provide assistance to a Damaged Utility. If the Authorized Representative determines that the Assisting Utility is capable of and willing to provide assistance, the Assisting Utility shall so notify the Authorized Representative of the Damaged Utility and providing the following information:
1. a complete description of the personnel, equipment and materials to be furnished to the Damaged Utility.
 2. the estimated length of time the personnel, equipment and materials will be available.
 3. the work experience and ability of the personnel and the capability of the equipment to be furnished.
 4. the name of the person or persons to be designated as supervisory personnel; and
 5. the estimated time when the assistance provided will arrive at the location designated by the Authorized Representative of the Damaged Utility.
- C. The personnel and equipment of the Assisting Utility shall remain, at all times, under the direct supervision and control of the designated supervisory personnel of the Assisting Utility. In instances where only equipment is provided by the Assisting Utility, the ownership of said equipment shall remain with the Assisting Utility and said equipment shall be returned to the Assisting Utility immediately upon request. Representatives of the Damaged Utility shall suggest Work assignments and schedules for the personnel of the Assisting Utility; however, the designated supervisory personnel of the Assisting Utility shall have the exclusive responsibility and authority for assigning Work and establishing Work schedules for the personnel of the Assisting Utility. The designated supervisory personnel shall maintain daily personnel time records and a log of equipment hours, be responsible for the

operation and maintenance of the equipment furnished by the Assisting Utility, and report Work progress to the Damaged Utility.

- D. The Damaged Utility shall have the responsibility of providing food and housing for the personnel of the Assisting Utility from the time of departure from their regularly scheduled Work location until the time of return to their regularly scheduled Work location. The food and shelter provided shall be subject to the approval of the supervisory personnel of the Assisting Utility. If not agreeable, food and shelter shall be provided and paid for as determined by mutual agreement.
- E. The Damaged Utility shall have the responsibility of providing communications between the personnel of the Assisting Utility and the Damaged Utility.

ARTICLE IV. REIMBURSABLE EXPENSES

The terms and conditions governing reimbursement for any assistance provided under this Agreement shall be agreed to prior to the providing of such assistance and shall be in accordance with the following provisions:

- A. PERSONNEL – During the Period of Assistance, the Assisting Utility shall continue to pay its employees according to its then prevailing rules and regulations. The Damaged Utility shall reimburse the Assisting Utility for all direct and indirect payroll costs and expenses incurred during the Period of Assistance, including, but not limited to, employee pensions and benefits.
- B. EQUIPMENT – The Assisting Utility shall be reimbursed for the use of its equipment during the Period of Assistance according to the SCHEDULE OF EQUIPMENT RATES established and published by FEMA. If an Assisting Utility uses an alternate basis of rates for equipment listed on the FEMA Schedule of Equipment Rates, it shall provide such rates to the Damaged Utility prior to providing assistance. Rates for equipment not referenced on the FEMA Schedule of Equipment Rates shall be developed based on actual recovery of costs.

- C. MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES – The Assisting Utility shall be reimbursed for all materials and supplies furnished by it and used or damaged during the Period of Assistance, unless such damage is caused by negligence of the Assisting Utility’s personnel. The measure of reimbursement shall be the replacement cost of the materials and supplies used or damaged, plus ten (10) percent of such cost. In the alternative, the parties may agree that the Damaged Utility will replace, with a like kind and quality as determined by the Assisting Utility, the materials and supplies used or damaged.
- D. PAYMENT – Unless mutually agreed otherwise, the Assisting Utility should bill the requesting utility for all expenses not later than ninety (90) days following the Period of Assistance. The requesting utility shall pay the bill in full not later than forty-five (45) days following the billing date. Unpaid bills shall become delinquent upon the forty-fifth (45th) day following the billing date, and once delinquent shall accrue interest at the rate of prime plus two percent (2%) per annum as reported by the Wall Street Journal.
- E. DISPUTED BILLINGS – Those undisputed portions of a billing should be paid under this payment plan. Only the disputed portions should be sent to arbitration under Article VI.

ARTICLE V. INSURANCE

Each Participating Utility shall bear the risk of its own actions, as it does with its day-to-day operations, and determine for itself what kinds of insurance, and in what amounts, it should carry. Nothing herein shall act or be construed as a waiver of any sovereign immunity or other exemption or limitation on liability that a Participating Utility may enjoy.

ARTICLE VI. ARBITRATION

All disputes between two or more participating utilities arising from participation in this Agreement, which cannot be settled through negotiation, shall be submitted to binding arbitration before a panel of three persons chosen from the members of this Mutual Aid Agreement which are participating utilities, excluding those members that are parties to the dispute.

Each party to the dispute shall choose one panel member and those panel members shall agree on one additional panel member.

The panel shall adopt rules of procedure and evidence, shall determine all issues in dispute by majority vote and shall assess damages. The decision of the panel shall be final and binding upon the parties to the dispute.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the covenants and obligations contained herein, the participating utility listed here, as a Participating Utility duly executes this Water/ Wastewater Mutual Aid Agreement this 14th day of May, 2024.

Water/Wastewater Utility Representative(s):

By: [Signature] Vice Chairman By: _____

Title: Hernando County BOCC, Title: Hernando County Utilities

Chairperson Department Director

for Elizabeth Narverud

Please Print Name

Please Print Name

Name of Participating Utility: HERNANDO COUNTY WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT

Please Print Name of Utility

Approved as to Form
and Legal Sufficiency

By: Victoria Anderson
County Attorney's Office

**Hernando County Utilities Department
Authorized Representatives**

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