



# Action Plan

## Category 9 – Flood Emergency Planning, Response and Recovery

### Action 8.5 – Providing Additional Capacity via 311 to handle excess calls to DC Water during a Flood Event

#### Overview and Implementation Strategy:

HSEMA, along with DC Water and OUC established an inter-agency project team, comprising key stakeholders to create a pathway for providing additional capacity via 311 to handle excess calls to DC Water during a flood event and for targeted response and damage assessment.

The mission of HSEMA is to support and coordinate homeland security and emergency management efforts, ensuring that emergency operations in the District of Columbia are prepared to protect against, plan for, respond to, and recover from natural and man-made hazards. When severe flooding occurs in the district; it tests our capabilities and stretches emergency resources. To accomplish this mission, HSEMA requires pathways for facilitating contact with the public.

The OUC/311 is the District’s primary access point for residents and visitors to request information and city services. As such, OUC serves as the primary administrator for the service request management system (“SRMS”) used for data entry and tracking of requests that are submitted through the 311 mobile application and online through 311.DC.GOV, or directly by the servicing agency.

To streamline processes related to customer service initiatives during man-made or natural hazards like a flooding event, the OUC and HSEMA developed a MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) to use their system to create necessary service request types that will accommodate the service or program requirements. The District agency then becomes an end user of an OUC application and uses the application’s functionality either as part of the overall 311 public service delivery process or as a separate application limited to internal District or agency system access.

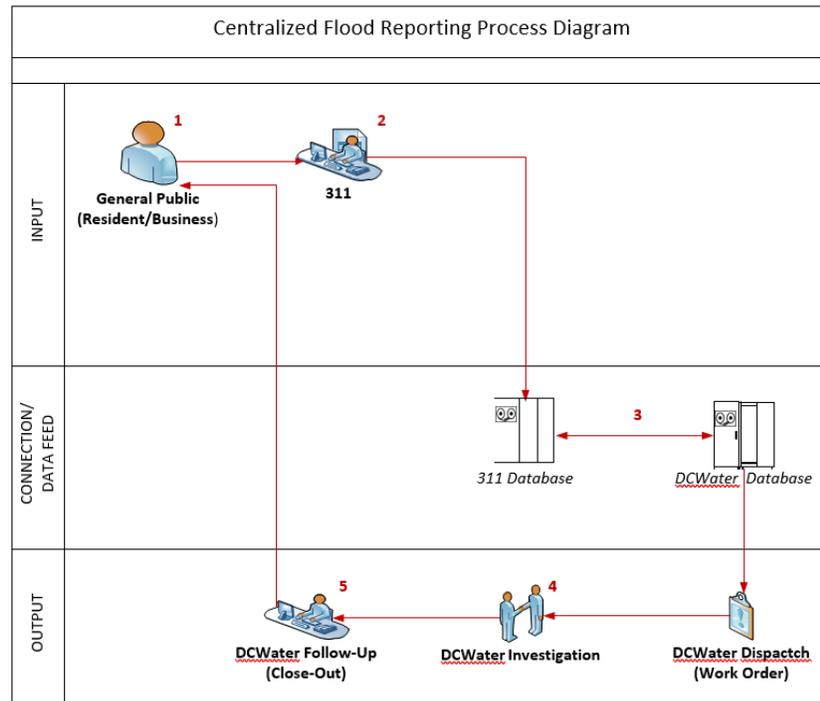
OUC/311 also developed a system with DC Water to provide additional capacity to handle excess calls to DC Water during a flood event. It works by creating a centralized flood reporting process.

See diagram on next page:

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#### Impacted City Ward/ANC:

- Wards: All 8

#### Lead Agency:

- District of Columbia Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency
  - o Coordinate with partners to develop an interagency project team
  - o Streamline information collection process including centralized community self-reporting process

#### Supporting Agencies, Roles/Commitments:

- Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO)
  - o Design, and development new or connect existing information technology communication applications to compile scoping data/information and facilitate effective inspection and remediation.
  - o Conduct a test of the information technology/communication application and exercise to validate OUC and DC Water’s personnel readiness to implement new procedures.
- DC WATER
  - o Implement new process to take calls from residents and send surge calls to OUC
  - o DC Water “Report a problem” set to receive information from OUC system.
  - o Data collected from the residents can assist in the timely disbursement of assistance and resources in inundated flood areas. This information is critical to mitigate the damage to property and life and to understand trends.
- Office of United Communications (OUC)

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- o Design, develop, deliver training for relevant OUC personnel on modification of existing establishment of new procedures
- o Take on surge calls from DC Water in flood emergency incidents and events.
- o 311 call takers compile and share resident information with DC Water “Report Problems” system to track calls for residents.

## Background:

### Impact of this Effort on Task Force Goal:

- The impact of this effort will prevent fatalities, injuries, and destruction of property if residents are able to report flooding accurately.
- Many homes, business, roadways and surrounding areas in the District are subject to flooding. the goal of this effort is for residents to be assured that the District has the capacity to handle excess calls during a flood emergency and that there are equitable ways to reduce the risk of water damage and its impact o low-and fixed income homeowners.
- OUC/311 effort to support DC Water in call taking also provides vital data to District agencies (i.e. HSEMA) that would assist with flood mapping, analysis, and strategizing mitigation projects, which serves the Task Force goal to prioritize the protection of vulnerable populations.

### Historical Context:

- *How did we arrive at this particular situation?*

Where it rains, it can flood. The climate and topography of Washington, DC make flooding more likely to happen. In addition, certain parts of the city are more likely to flood due to their elevation and proximity to streams, rivers, and other permanent water elements. If residents in a flood prone area, make adjustments to their property, it can be an essential action to reduce risk of damage.

The September 10 flash flood impacted residential, business, and government properties as well as public space in each district quadrant. The preceding extreme weather hazard produced historic rainfall which culminated in ‘urban drainage’ flood type occurring in flood-prone (including nuisance) and non-traditional locations. The District’s storm water management system, as designed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, was effectively unable convey the magnitude causing hazardous backflow into structures.

Understanding the situation and determining impact scope (extent and magnitude) was difficult due to consistent and incomplete data captured by DC Water, OUC, HSEMA, and some councilmembers’ offices. HSEMA coordinated enhanced response/recovery actions to ascertain scope details, including but not limited executing post-emergency canvassing operations,



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conducting targeted community outreach and engagement, facilitating emergency clean-up services, and evaluating viability of applying to federal recovery programs. Ultimately the District did not qualify for federal aid, so residents and business were forced to recovery using a combination of homeowner/renter insurance, DC Water’s claims process, and personal savings.

After the September 10 incident, HSEMA, DC Water and OUC developed a strategy to establish an effective capacity for handling excess calls to DC Water during a flood event. Allowing OUC/311 call takers to received surge calls also helps to collect vital data and provides the District the ability to use that for analysis, to protect residents, reach, respond faster and more effectively to develop future projects that would mitigate against flooding.

- *What Actions have already been taken?*

HSEMA lead an inter-agency project team, comprising key stakeholders to create a consolidated pathway for flood reporting

HSEMA and OUC/311 developed a Memorandum of Understanding for 311, call centers, and service request handling services

DC Water developed a centralized system to share resident information to OUC/311 during for response and data collection.

OUC/311 have agreed to be surge call takers to assist DC water during major flooding incidents

HSEMA, OUC and DC Water will continue to showcase the ongoing project to partner agencies, to increase awareness and inter-agency coordination.

- *What are options to alleviate flooding impacts?*

Options to alleviate flooding impacts would be to ensure that storm drains are clear of debris so water can drain without obstacles. Another option includes expanding storm water management to increase the capacity of water that drainages can handle during a heavy rain event.

Additional options to alleviate flooding impacts can be District agencies and community partners working together to ensure neighborhoods and residents have the resources they need prior to flood events.

## Equity

### How does this action assist vulnerable communities?

- District, and private agencies identify areas of improvement in call process and tracking resident data for timely flood response and recovery protocols.
- A effective system will assist the most vulnerable social-economic areas within the District to provide fair awareness of flooding across the District, and fast response.

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- The data collected by call centers will be used to start to alleviate barriers in areas and strengthen the efficiency and effectiveness for flood-prone communities.

#### Timeline:

Fiscal Year	Responsible Agency	Action
2020	HSEMA	Leadership task agency to establish an inter-agency project team, comprising key stakeholders to create a single consolidated pathway for targeted damage assessment to ascertain flood extent and magnitude.
2021	OUC/311	<p>Design and develop or connect existing information technology and communication applications to compile scoping data/information.</p> <p>Design develop and deliver training for relevant OUC and DC Water personnel on modification of existing or establishment of new procedures.</p> <p>Conduct a test of info tech communication application and exercise to validate OUC and DC Water personnel readiness to implement the new process.</p>
2021	DC Water OUC/311	<p>Implement new process to take calls from residents and send surge calls to OUC</p> <p>DC Water “Report a problem” set to receive information from OUC system.</p> <p>Developed a process of data collection from the residents. Which can assist in the timely disbursement of assistance and resources in inundated flood areas. This information is critical to mitigate the damage to property and life and to understand trends.</p>

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2022	Interagency Agency Working Group	The established Working group will continue to showcase the project for increased awareness and coordination with District agencies to provide additional capacity to streamline the call taking process for district residents.
	HSEMA	Conduct a series of HSEEP-compliant exercise events to capture best practice/lessons learned and validate capability enhancement.

### Budget:

Fiscal Year	Responsible Agency	Funding Source	Amount to be Requested	Description
2023	OUC/311 DC Water	Unknown	As Needed	Funding for MOU and establishing the centralized reporting capacity while handling surge Resident calls

### Public Outreach and Input:

**Public outreach & engagement approach/actions:** - Develop a multi-media public awareness campaign to change reporting behavior

- We will utilize interagency PIO's, along with private partners, and community leaders for public outreach and engagement.

### What were the Public Comments of relevance to this Action?

Not applicable