

# 10 Steps to Prepare and Maintain an Emergency Action Plan

## **1. Complete dam break inundation studies and field reconnaissance**

Figure out the degree of flooding under one or more dam break scenarios. There are simple empirical methods as well as complex modeling techniques that require field study.

## **2. Prepare inundation maps with flood wave arrival times**

Based on the studies in step one. Overlay inundation areas with location of human infrastructure. If no infrastructure is threatened, an EAP is probably not necessary.

## **3. Identify emergency situations and actions**

Likely problems the dam might have such as overtopping and piping failure and how to detect and react to problems.

## **4. Identify and meet with involved agencies**

Identify key emergency personnel for the downstream community and orient them to the EAP. Identify contractors in the area that may be able to take corrective actions on dams.

## **5. Identify communications methods – primary and backup**

Phone, radio sirens etc...

## **6. Prepare contact charts identifying individuals, phone numbers, and order of contact**

Create communication flow chart(s) and have full contact information for both the primary contacts as well as backups if the primary contact is not available. This is a who to call phone tree if there is a problem with the dam.

## **7. Prepare draft EAP**

See format overview and example EAP materials.

## **8. Distribute draft EAP to involved parties for review and comment**

May want to have a meeting and walk through the EAP with the group of emergency responders to see how it works.

## **9. Revise EAP, obtain approval, and distribute copies**

It is important to get concurrence from people that will have to help implement the plan. It is also important that all the people that have roles in implementing the EAP get a copy of the EAP and know and understand their roles.

## **10. Regularly test, review, and revise the EAP**

Can do table top tests where you can walk through a scenario and discuss it. Another approach is to have a functional exercise with a failure scenario using handheld radios in separate rooms to simulate how the EAP would be executed. A more complete approach is a full blown simulation on site involving a mock evacuation etc... The important point is the EAP is a living document and contact information is dynamic and it should have a schedule for updating and changing the EAP along with a list of all EAP holders to get information to them.