

**Clark University**

**Water Outage Preparedness and Response Plan**

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# Clark University – Water Outage Preparedness and Response Plan

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# Clark University – Water Outage Preparedness and Response Plan

## Introduction

No plan can provide complete directions for each specific circumstance that may develop, however the Emergency Response Team has developed this Water Outage Preparedness and Response Plan in order to:

- acquaint faculty, staff and students with hazards associated with a water outage
- indicate the actions required to overcome or minimize these hazards
- define responsibility in carrying out such actions

Specific activities and advisories are subject to change by University administration as appropriate to specific circumstances. This Plan shall not be construed in a manner that limits the use of prudent judgment and common sense.

## Definitions

For purposes of this document, a water outage is defined as any of the following:

- A significant or complete reduction in water pressure that may impair the proper functioning of fire protection plumbing, or heating systems.
- An interruption in the supply of potable water due to contamination or disruption of the water supply.
- An announced shutdown of the water supply by the city to allow it to repair water main damage.

## Risks Associated with Water Outages

The following risks and safety issues are associated with water outages

- Increased fire risk. Sprinkler systems are in-operable during water outages or situations where water pressure has been reduced significantly.
- Lack of sanitary toilet facilities. Until portable toilets arrive, toilets will still be used without the ability to flush. This may create unsanitary conditions.
- Lack of drinking water.
- Contaminated drinking water.
- Water damage from overflowing toilets. Toilet valves may not close properly if there is not adequate water pressure. Once full pressure is restored, the stuck valves stay open which may cause toilets to overflow if they are blocked up.
- Lack of heat. The main boiler plant requires significant quantities of water to remain operational. Should a water outage occur during the winter, heating of buildings could become a problem.
- Local residents looking to use Clark facilities. In the event of a prolonged water outage, local residents may try to access Clark's resources (water, portable toilets, etc.)

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## Preparedness

A water outage may affect the campus as a standalone event (water main break, water supply contamination) or in conjunction with another emergency situation (earthquake, major storm, etc.). As a water outage will generally occur with little or no notice, advance planning for such an event is of prime importance. With an aging infrastructure in the City of Worcester, a water main break affecting the University is a likely event to occur.

In the event of a major water main break, it is most likely that the city will issue an advisory not to drink any water until pressure has been restored and water has been tested. The University should expect the testing to take 24-72 hours to complete.

Responsibilities for advance planning are as follows:

Department	Task
<b>Physical Plant</b>	Identify vendors capable of providing an adequate supply of portable toilets on short notice. Determine locations where the toilets would be located.
<b>Physical Plant</b>	Maintain a list of buildings that do not rely on the main boilers for heat. These buildings may be used for shelter in the event there is not adequate water to supply the main boilers.
<b>Physical Plant</b>	Identify suppliers capable of providing bulk water for use in boilers on short notice.
<b>Dining Services</b>	Ensure an emergency supply of drinking water is on hand at all times.
<b>Dining Services</b>	Identify suppliers capable of providing drinking water (bottles, 5 gallon containers) on short notice
<b>Dining Services</b>	Maintain an emergency supply of paper plates and plastic utensils.
<b>Residential Life and Housing</b>	Train RAs in appropriate measures to be taken in the event of a water outage. In particular, they should be on heightened alert to the risk of fire.
<b>Emergency Response Team</b>	Sign up to receive City of Worcester emergency alerts to be notified of emergency situations, including water main breaks at <a href="http://tinyurl.com/cdd2lgx">tinyurl.com/cdd2lgx</a>

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## Responses/Action Steps

Once a water outage situation has been established, the following steps should be considered. This list is not all inclusive and the responses should be appropriate to the circumstances of the situation.

Department	Task
<b>Physical Plant</b>	Upon confirmation of a water main break/disruption that will impact the water supply, contact pre-screened portable toilet vendors and order toilets to be delivered to planned campus locations.
<b>Physical Plant</b>	If outage occurs during heating season, contact bulk water vendor to arrange for back-up water supply for boiler room.
<b>University Police</b>	Monitor campus, including portable toilet locations.
<b>Dining Services</b>	Determine available supply of drinking water and contact suppliers to place additional orders as necessary.
<b>Dining Services</b>	Review supply of paper plates and plastic utensils and order additional amounts as necessary.
<b>Dining Services</b>	Review menu items and formulate plan for continuity of dining operations. Turn off ice makers, soda fountains, etc. Provide alternative supply of drinking water to students.
<b>Emergency Response Team</b>	Appropriate members (University Police, Dean of Students/RLH, Physical Plant, Dining Services, Clark Alerts sender, etc.) of the team should be in communication to assess the situation and determine what additional steps need to be taken.
<b>Residential Life and Housing</b>	Communicate with RAs regarding situation. Ask RA's to be alert to fire risks and plumbing issues.
<b>Emergency Response Team</b>	Monitor City of Worcester website for news and announcements: <a href="http://www.worcesterma.gov/announcements/">www.worcesterma.gov/announcements/</a>
<b>Science Departments</b>	Cancel any labs utilizing hazardous chemicals or flames since emergency wash stations/showers will not be operative.
<b>Clark Alerts Communication Team</b>	Send Clark Alert messages alerting Clark Community of the situation (see communication section below)

## Staffing

In the event a decision is made to close the campus due to the water outage, the following departments will identify essential staff to remain on hand:

- Residential Life and Housing
- University Police
- Physical Plant
- Dining Services

The department of Residential Life and Housing can assist in providing temporary housing for staff required to remain on campus.

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## Evacuation/Shelter

In the event that buildings need to be evacuated for safety purposes, the following locations will be designated as emergency shelters:

- Kneller Athletic Center
- Dolan Field House

## Class Cancellation

The decision whether or not to cancel classes rests with the President or his/her designee.

Students living in University housing should notify Residential Life and Housing if they plan to evacuate from campus. This notification will assist with the accountability and planning efforts.

## Communications

All instructions such as canceling classes, closing of buildings, releasing of employees, special instructions and the relocation of students will be done in accordance with the Safety and Emergency Communications Plan.

Depending on the nature of the water outage any/all of the following should be communicated:

- Expect low/no water pressure.
- Expect rusty water.
- Conserve water.
- Do not use tap for drinking, cooking, or brushing teeth until further notice
- Residents in apartments may boil water for a minimum of one minute before drinking.
- Locations where safe drinking water is available.
- Portable toilet locations.
- Visit [clarku.edu/emergency](http://clarku.edu/emergency) for updated information.
- Any changes to dining services.
- Anticipated duration of water outage.
- Water leaks/overflows may occur when water is restored. Please remove belongings from the floor. Monitor toilets/plumbing and immediately contact Physical Plant or University Police in the event of any problems.

Follow-up communications should be sent out once safe drinking water is restored.

## Resumption of Service

Following the restoration of water services, Physical Plant and University Police will assess campus buildings and facilities for any damage or water leaks. If necessary, the President will issue necessary directives and instructions concerning the resumption of classes and the use of University buildings and facilities.

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Residential Life and Housing will assist with relocating any displaced students back to residence halls or other campus housing. In the event of any water damage, they will notify the Business Manager who will assess the situation and assist students looking to file a claim for damaged property.

Information related to re-opening the campus and resumption of classes will be communicated through the Clark Alert emergency notification system (email/text/voice as appropriate), the Clark website, and local radio and television stations.