SWEETWATER SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT

TO: Board of Directors **AGENDA NO. V-D**

FROM: Steve Mack, General Manager

Meeting Date: November 5, 2009

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION/ACTION RE ADOPTION OF RESOLUTIONS 09-26, ADOPTION OF THE STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SEMS) AND 09-27 ADOPTION OF THE NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NIMS)

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Adopt Resolutions 09-26 and 09-27 which formally establish the State Emergency Management System (SEMS) and the National Incident Management System as the approach with which the District participates in local and regional emergencies.

FISCAL IMPACT: none, as the District is currently participating in SEMS and NIMS.

DISCUSSION:

Upon updating the District's Emergency Preparedness Response and Recovery Plan (Plan), staff noticed that the Plan contains a draft of a resolution adopting the State Emergency Management System (SEMS), but not an approved version. Upon investigation it was discovered that the District had never formally approved SEMS, as required by State law, and it was further discovered that the District has not approved the National Incident Management System (NIMS), which is required by Federal law. The recommended action formally establishes SEMS and NIMS as the approach through which the District participates in local and regional emergencies.

SEMS is an outgrowth of the experiences of the Oakland fire in 1999 where after action studies demonstrated that better coordination between agencies would have significantly reduced the damages and costs associated with that fire. Prior to SEMS there had been efforts to coordinate emergency response activities, but the results had been spotty. SEMS requires that all public agencies in California train in a consistent response approach to emergencies and use that approach when emergencies happen.

NIMS is an outgrowth of 9/11 and was modeled on SEMS which has demonstrated its effectiveness in emergencies. For California agencies there is nothing really new in NIMS when compared to SEMS; it just raises the organizational approach up to the Federal level and bring Federal agencies into the regional approach to emergency management.

Exhibit 1 contains some brief introductory information SEMS and NIMS which have been extracted from their respective websites which both have very complete information.

The District has been following the SEMS and NIMS approach since their inception, but apparently has not formally approved the programs. Important concepts include:

- Incident Command System (ICS) – ICS establishes a structure whereby all responding units fit into the response hierarchy without regard to the individual agency hierarchy. This means that incident commanders can give orders to emergency responders without regard to normal chains of command.

- Operational Area Concept – when an emergency happens, an operational area is determined, ICS is set up for the operational area, and agencies outside the operational area will be requested for assistance.

- District staff are emergency responders regardless of location. In the event of an emergency, District staff first should determine their families and property are safe and then should attempt to help the District with the emergency. If they are prevented from reaching the District, they should inquire locally if they can be of assistance.

A good example for the District is Russian River flooding. In the event of a flood Sonoma County Office of Emergency Services (OES) sets up the ICS structure and the District fits into the structure in it's operational role as the operators of our water systems. Since we will be busy with that during a flood and we know our system best, the ICS approach has our staff keeping our water systems operational, to the extent possible. OES coordinates the operational area response, including getting information from us. If we need additional resources, they will take the lead in getting those resources. Among OES responsibilities is an annual preparation meeting which has been scheduled for November 5.

The adoption of these resolutions and review of the information associated with SEMS and NIMS is a reminder that an important role of the District is response to emergencies. District staff are first responders to all types of emergencies and assistance in emergencies is a role for all public employees; it's an important part of our jobs.

Exhibit 1. SEMS Special District Involvement and NIMS Background Information

SEMS General System Description

From: Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) Guidelines,
SEMS Guidelines URL:
http://www.oes.ca.gov/Operational/OESHome.nsf/Content/B49435352108954488256C2A0071E038?OpenDocument

Part I. System Description, Section A

1. What Is SEMS? The Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) is the system required by Government Code Section 8607(a) for managing emergencies involving multiple jurisdictions and agencies. SEMS consists of five organizational levels, which are activated as necessary:

1. field response
2. local government
3. operational area
4. regional
5. state

SEMS incorporates the functions and principles of the Incident Command System (ICS), the Master Mutual Aid Agreement (MMAA), existing mutual aid systems, the operational area concept, and multi-agency or inter-agency coordination.

Local governments must use SEMS to be eligible for funding of their response-related personnel costs under state disaster assistance programs.

2. Purpose of SEMS SEMS has been established to provide effective management of multi-agency and multijurisdictional emergencies in California. By standardizing key elements of the emergency management system, SEMS is intended to:

facilitate the flow of information within and between levels of the system, and
facilitate coordination among all responding agencies.

Use of SEMS will improve the mobilization, deployment, utilization, tracking, and demobilization of needed mutual aid resources. Use of SEMS will reduce the incidence of poor coordination and communications, and reduce resource ordering duplication on multi-agency and multijurisdictional responses. SEMS is designed to be flexible and adaptable to the varied disasters that occur in California and to the needs of all emergency responders.

Part I System Description, C. Local Government Level.

10. Special District Involvement: Special districts are local governments in SEMS. The emergency response role of special districts is generally focused on their normal services. During disasters, some types of special districts will be more extensively involved in the emergency response by assisting other local governments.

Coordination and communications should be established among special districts that are involved in the emergency response, other local governments, and the operational area. This may be accomplished in various ways depending on the local situation. Relationships among special districts, cities, county government, and the operational area are complicated by overlapping boundaries and by the multiplicity of special districts. Special districts need to work with the local governments in their service areas to determine how best to establish coordination and communications in emergencies. The following discusses some situations and possible ways to establish coordination.

The simplest situation is when a special district is wholly contained within a single city or within a county unincorporated area. Usually in this case, the special district should have a representative at the EOC of the city or county in which it is located and direct communications should be established between the special district EOC and the city or county EOC. An exception may occur when there are many special districts within a large city or county.

Typically, special district boundaries cross municipal boundary lines similar to state emergency response agencies. A special district may serve several cities and county unincorporated areas. Some special districts serve more than one county. Ideally, a special district involved in the emergency response will have representatives at all activated city or county EOCs within its services area. However, this may not be practical when many jurisdictions within its services area are affected. One alternative may be to focus coordination at the operational area level and designate a representative to the operational area EOC to work with other local government representatives at the EOC.

When there are many special districts within one city or within the county unincorporated area, it may not be feasible for the city or county EOC to accommodate representatives from all special districts during area-wide disasters. In such cases, the city or county should work with the special districts to develop alternate ways of establishing coordination and communications. Some alternatives to consider:

- representatives at the EOC only from designated key special districts ---telecommunications with other special districts.
- one representative from each type of special district who would communicate with other special districts of the same type.
- establish a special district coordination center for a particular type of special district, such as a water district coordination center, that communicates with the jurisdiction EOC. This arrangement may be established for the operational area.

What is "NIMS"?

(from NIMS website - http://www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/

The National Incident Management System (NIMS) is a comprehensive national approach to incident management, applicable at all jurisdictional levels and across functional disciplines. NIMS provides a consistent nationwide approach for federal, state, tribal entities, local governments, and private and non-governmental organizations to work effectively and efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.
NIMS is the outgrowth of systems developed and implemented by dedicated responders over many years, and its design and approach was developed by those who use these systems every day.

Why do I need to be concerned about NIMS?

● Responders from your county may be involved in providing or receiving mutual aid during response to large-scale emergencies. They use an Incident Command System (ICS) to organize response to emergencies. ICS is a part of NIMS. NIMS provides the method by which people, and the resources needed to effect a response, are coordinated. You need to learn about NIMS because this is the method that the responders in your county use to respond to emergencies and disasters.

● **As of October 1, 2006, all federal preparedness assistance is contingent on your state's compliance with NIMS.** This assistance includes federal funding from the DHS Emergency Management Performance Grants (EMPG), Homeland Security Grant Program and Urban Area Security

Initiative (UASI). That means that if your county wants to be eligible to receive federal funds for preparedness activities which includes nearly 50 different programs from more than 25 federal departments and agencies, your county must be able to certify that it has complied with the requirements of NIMS explained in this booklet. (A current list of federal preparedness funding from all programs and agencies can be found at www.fema.gov/emergency/nims/index.shtm)

Adoption of NIMS

One of the key requirements of NIMS compliance is for local jurisdictions which provide emergency management, public health, public works, emergency medical services, police, and/or fire response to adopt NIMS through executive order, proclamation, resolution or legislation as the county's all-hazards, incident response system.

Local adoption of NIMS was a compliance requirement for federal FY05, and many counties adopted NIMS formally at that time.

If NIMS is adopted by local legislation, the legislation should not have "sunset" provisions, or if it does, the legislation must be renewed as often as necessary to maintain NIMS as the incident response system used locally.

Training

Free training about NIMS, ICS, the National Response Plan (NRP), and related topics is available from FEMA's Emergency Management Institute Virtual Campus. A complete list of all training that is available to take on-line is at www.training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/crslist.asp. Training requirements for basic NIMS compliance is the on-line course ICS-700: NIMS, An Introduction. This course is accessible from the link above.

Resolution No. 09-26

A Resolution Of The Sweetwater Springs Water District Board Of Directors Adopting The California Standardized Emergency Management System, Master Mutual Aid Agreement, And Operational Area Concepts

WHEREAS Sweetwater Springs Water District facilities, properties, and employees are located where numerous natural or human caused catastrophes may occur and that could affect local or regional areas, and

WHEREAS the greater efficiency for emergency and disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation can be achieved by joining efforts between all political subdivisions, including cities, counties, special districts, other public benefit non-profit corporations, and utilities in the development and implementation of operational areas; and

WHEREAS the Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS) regulations identify the need for all political subdivisions within the geographical area of a county to establish an operational area to act as an intermediate level of the state emergency services organization to support local government before and during emergencies; and

WHEREAS following the 1991 East Bay Hills Firestorm, the California Emergency Services Act was amended, creating SEMS (Government Code §8607) to ensure all responding agencies would plan and coordinate emergency response together by incorporating the operational area concepts and master mutual aid agreements; and

WHEREAS the Sweetwater Springs Water District claims for State reimbursement of personnel response costs are contingent upon adopting and using SEMS; and

WHEREAS the Sweetwater Springs Water District wishes to coordinate emergency and disaster planning and response with other agencies and to maximize the ability to recover costs incurred during response; and

WHEREAS the Sweetwater Springs Water District staff have received and continue to update SEMS and National Incident Management System (NIMS) training and participate in the SEMS emergency response approach, including operational area concepts and Incident Command System (ICS).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Board Of Directors of the Sweetwater Springs Water District that the District hereby adopts the State of California SEMS, Master Mutual Aid Agreement and operational area concepts as the means by which the Sweetwater Springs Water District will plan and respond jointly with other emergency response agencies; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all Sweetwater Springs Water District emergency plans and emergency response training shall reflect the use of SEMS, operational area concepts, and master mutual aid agreements and the compliance standards thereof; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Sweetwater Springs Water District enter into and participate in assistance and operational area agreements to facilitate joint preparedness and response; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Manager take the steps necessary to effectuate these and future emergency-response-related agreements.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a Resolution duly and regularly adopted and passed by the Board of Directors of the SWEETWATER SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT, Sonoma County, California, at a meeting held on November 5, 2009, by the following vote.

Wanda Smith: _____
Victoria Wikle: _____
Jim Quigley: _____
Sukey Robb-Wilder: _____
Gaylord Schaap: _____

_____
Victoria Wikle
President of the Board

ATTEST:

_____
Julie A. Kenny
Clerk of the Board

Resolution No. 09-27

A Resolution Of The Sweetwater Springs Water District Board Of Directors Adopting The National Incident Management System (NIMS)

WHEREAS, the President of the United States in Homeland Security Directive (HSPD)-5, directed the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security to develop and administer a National Incident Management System (NIMS), which would provide a consistent nationwide approach for Federal, State, local, and tribal governments to work together more effectively and efficiently to prevent, prepare for, respond to and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size or complexity; and

WHEREAS, the collective input and guidance from all Federal, State, local, and tribal homeland security partners has been, and will continue to be, vital to the development, effective implementation and utilization of a comprehensive NIMS; and

WHEREAS, it is necessary and desirable that all Federal, State, local and tribal emergency agencies and personnel coordinate their efforts to effectively and efficiently provide the highest levels of incident management; and

WHEREAS, to facilitate the most efficient and effective incident management it is critical that Federal, State, local, and tribal organizations utilize standardized terminology, standardized organizational structures, interoperable communications, consolidated action plans, unified command structures, uniform personnel qualification standards, uniform standards for planning, training, and exercising, comprehensive resource management, and designated incident facilities during emergencies or disasters; and

WHEREAS, the NIMS standardized procedures for managing personnel, communications, facilities and resources will improve the District's ability to utilize federal funding to enhance local and state agency readiness, maintain first responder safety, and streamline incident management processes; and

WHEREAS, the Incident Command System components of NIMS are already an integral part of various incident management activities throughout the District as required by the Sweetwater Springs Water District Emergency Preparedness Response and Recovery Plan; and

WHEREAS, the NIMS approach to emergency management complements the California Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), and operational area agreement concepts with Sonoma County, in which the District also participates;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Sweetwater Springs Water District Board of Directors hereby establishes the National Incident Management System as the local standard for the management of routine and catastrophic emergencies.

I hereby certify that the foregoing is a full, true, and correct copy of a Resolution duly and regularly adopted and passed by the Board of Directors of the SWEETWATER SPRINGS WATER DISTRICT, Sonoma County, California, at a meeting held on November 5, 2009, by the following vote.

Resolution 09-27, NIMS Adoption

Wanda Smith: _____
Victoria Wikle: _____
Jim Quigley: _____
Sukey Robb-Wilder: _____
Gaylord Schaap: _____

_____
Victoria Wikle
President of the Board

ATTEST:

_____
Julie A. Kenny
Clerk of the Board