



Rural Water Prepared to Restore Water After Harvey

DUNCAN, Okla. – State Rural Water Associations, especially those in Texas and Louisiana are ready to respond to small communities once flood waters recede.

“Restoring water and wastewater service is the primary goal of the Rural Water Emergency Response teams,” said Matt Holmes, Deputy CEO of the National Rural Water Association.

The Rural Water Network consist of mutual aid agreements from other states to provide trained emergency response personnel, equipment and supplies to restore service to local communities.

“Restoring service after a flood is a complicated task,” Holmes said.

The first step to restoring clean drinking water to a community is reestablishing electricity. Rural Water has access to hundreds of emergency generators that can be used to provide temporary power until power companies can repair electric systems.

Floods can create additional complications because they can potentially contaminate the entire drinking water system. That means that wells, pumps and distribution lines may have to be cleared and decontaminated to meet safe drinking water standards.

Staff of State Rural Water Associations undergo annual training to respond and manage emergencies. Often, the general public does not realize the amount of pre-planning needed to respond to these types of events. Meals, fuel, lodging and, above all else, safety have to be planned out before entering into an emergency area. Rural Water staff is trained and ready to respond once access is made available.