



# Association of Environmental Authorities of New Jersey

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## A Refresher on Crisis Communication

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Good communication is always important, but in a crisis, it is even more essential. The good news is that there are some basic commonsense steps to take to get information to your employees, stakeholders and the public.

Create a communications team. A small team with key representatives from communications, leadership and Human Resources will help craft and vet messages to be sure they hit the mark.

Develop your message. Your initial statement should include a clear explanation of what you are doing to manage operations and to keep staff and customers safe. In addition, remember to:

- **Accept responsibility** - this applies to all crisis situations. Apologize (sincerely) if necessary and state the pertinent facts.
- **Explain** - state the steps you are taking to move towards a solution, share response times and expectations as clearly as possible.
- **Address questions people will have.** Put yourself in their place and consider what you would want to know. Focus on what is important to them.
- **Empathize** - show that you understand what is at stake.
- **Express thanks.**

Communicate early and often. Your key team members should work to establish a consistent message that can be shared with stakeholders as soon as possible. Be sure to provide updates often and take steps to monitor and respond to feedback from all communications channels.

Remember that it's ok to change your mind. Sometimes we can anticipate what might happen, but it's certainly possible that you may find that situations are changing quickly, and new plans must be implemented. Being transparent and sharing that you are open to making changes based on new information builds trust.

Make it easy for people to find relevant information. Place information on the home page of your website and pin it to the top of social media feeds so people will not have to search to find it.

A note on communicating with employees. Not only are they serving on the front lines, carrying out their work completing essential duties to protect public health, but every one of your employees also serves as an ambassador for your organization as they interact with public. Be sure you have a clear and consistent message companywide that is

shared across all departments and employees. Post information in highly visible places, share through email and your company intranet. Communicate with employees often.

In all your communications, and in your daily work like, preparation, commonsense, clarity and sincerity go a long way in building trust and credibility. Look for ways to use this opportunity to help the public learn more about the work that your employees and your facility performs.

Be safe and keep communicating!

## Key Guidance on Employment-Related Matters

Attorney John Napolitano has provided AEA members with a memo offering guidelines on employment related matters.

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide answers and guidance to frequently asked questions raised by public sector municipal employers when dealing with issues related to the COVID-19 outbreak.

[View the entire memo and its important information here](#)

## Useful Covid-19 Links & Information

[New Jersey Executive Orders](#)

[New Jersey Administrative Orders](#)

NJ Maintains Site for **COVID-19 Rumor Control and Disinformation**: In a joint effort by the ROIC, NJOEM and NJOHSP, in order to combat rumors and disinformation regarding COVID-19, the [COVID-19 Rumor Control and Disinformation](#) site has been established and gone live.

[OSHA's Rule Relaxation](#) For Fit Testing and Use of Expired Respirators (N95's)

## News Links

We gather industry news from throughout the state so you don't have to! Explore the following headlines and more at this news link

- The 'water literacy' lessons cities can learn from Cape Town
- EPA Inches Toward PFAS Drinking Water Regulation
- US considers more water recycling \_ including from oilfields
- Lawsuit filed in DC seeks money for testing, treatment for controversial chemicals contaminating water
- Gov Murphy budget includes \$80M for drinking water

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