

## 2025 Richmond Water Crisis:

### Examples of Regional Cooperation and Coordination

The interconnected nature of the water systems in Richmond and its surrounding localities, such as Chesterfield, Henrico, Hanover, and Goochland counties, required a coordinated response, including resource sharing and mutual support during the 2025 Richmond Water Crisis.

Several examples of regional cooperation emerged to address the challenges faced by the affected communities:

1. **Communications:** Localities throughout the region were in contact with one another at various departmental levels throughout the crisis to assess impact and coordinate. As localities made the local determination to issue boil water advisories, they worked together to communicate with residents and provide advisory information for safety. Local governments also coordinated with state departments, including the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, the Virginia Department of Health, and the Virginia Department of Transportation. The collaborative efforts helped ensure public safety and awareness during a dynamic time.
2. **Local Government Assistance:** During the initial hours and days of the crisis, local governments from the greater Richmond region provided support in many ways, including delivery of emergency water supply to neighboring localities and supporting the diversion of essential services to assets across the region. Supporting localities included, but were not limited to, Chesterfield County and Charlottesville.

Local governments coordinated across Emergency Operations Centers to ensure information sharing and coordination. Support across the region was provided to support the return of operations, including lending public utilities expertise across the water system to troubleshoot service interruptions and heavy use/valve issues as the system came back online.

3. **Regional Emergency Management Response:** “The Central Virginia Incident Management Team (CVIMT) was deployed to support response efforts during the Richmond Water Crisis. A Unified Command was established, working in coordination with local governments, the Virginia National Guard and other agencies to ensure efficient and effective distribution of resources.
  - During the deployment, CVIMT assisted in coordinating multiple Points of Distribution (PODs) in Richmond, Henrico County, and Hanover County. Through these efforts—along with utilizing 311 services for residents without transportation—over 3,500 cases of water were distributed to those in need.
  - The team successfully demobilized on Sunday [January 12], leaving behind a strong collaborative response effort.” (CVIMT Facebook page)

4. **Disaster Support, Coordination with Partners:** Many local and regional community partners supported residents of the affected communities during the days of water outage. These included the YMCA, which opened facilities to residents across the region in need of shower facilities and other water services. Access was provided to anyone in need, regardless of YMCA membership.

Other regional organizations were impacted by and coordinated in the emergency response activities. These included the Capital Regional Airport Commission and local and regional hospital systems, including HCA, Bon Secours, and VCU Medical Center.

The Richmond-Henrico and Chickahominy Health Districts were significant partners in providing support in helping to distribute water through the department's Medical Reserve Corps.

The Community Foundation for a Greater Richmond worked with locality partners to facilitate the deployment of community volunteers for water distribution at sites across the region as additional support to local government and health department personnel.

5. **Recovery:** The City of Richmond has partnered with the United Way of Greater Richmond and Petersburg to launch the [RVA Water Recovery Fund](#), leveraging donated funds to be administered as an expansion of the City's Family Crisis Fund, which supports Richmonders with critical needs. Henrico County also leveraged its relationship with HumanKind to ensure basic needs can be met in the wake of the crisis.

These examples highlight the importance of regional cooperation in managing and mitigating the impacts of such crises. PlanRVA hosted two meetings on January 13 and 15 with local emergency management and human services representatives to facilitate coordination of recovery efforts and to determine the need for launching regional recovery activities. While it was determined that the launch of the Regional Emergency Response Fund was unnecessary for this crisis, the calls provided a venue to discuss local needs and strategies to address crisis-related hardships experienced by businesses and residents. Localities shared information about their communication with the Small Business Administration and initial ideas for enhanced coordination in outreach regarding business recovery.

Representatives from the Emergency Management Alliance of Central Virginia are now in talks with several local economic development leaders to coordinate outreach and education to the business community regarding business recovery. EMACV developed a curriculum in 2023-2024 geared toward business recovery, initially launching the education program in partnership with ChamberRVA in Powhatan County in 2023.

Our partners in RVA Rising are now considering elevating disaster response within the economic mobility framework to ensure coordination and effective execution of support across affected communities during crises and recovery.