

ARWA – Better Prepared for the Next Emergency!

By Chris Harmon, Operations Consultant

The Alabama Rural Water Association (ARWA) takes very seriously our role in responding quickly to emergency situations that affect the water and wastewater utilities of this state. ARWA is one of the first organizations to respond statewide and assist small towns and rural communities in re-establishing and maintaining service during natural disasters and emergencies. Many of the small towns and rural communities in Alabama lack the resources to have auxiliary generators for operation of their systems in times of emergency. This was very evident during the severe tornado outbreaks in April 2011 when ARWA assisted 45 communities that were without power and a means of back-up power. All of ARWA's Emergency Response efforts are coordinated with the State Emergency Management Agency. The Association is considered a priority First Responder meeting all NIMS qualifications and has a designated seat at the EMA headquarters office in Clanton during emergency situations. We are pleased to announce that we have secured funding from USDA Rural Development under the Community Facility Loan and Grant Program to



purchase two 100 KW portable generators. These generators will be available to rural utilities statewide for emergency/natural disaster assistance. They will also be used for training rural water and wastewater operators on the use, maintenance and operation of generators, and will be positioned for rapid mobilization statewide. We wish to express our sincere appreciation to Mr. Ronnie Davis, State Director for USDA Rural Development, and his staff, for their assistance in this effort.

