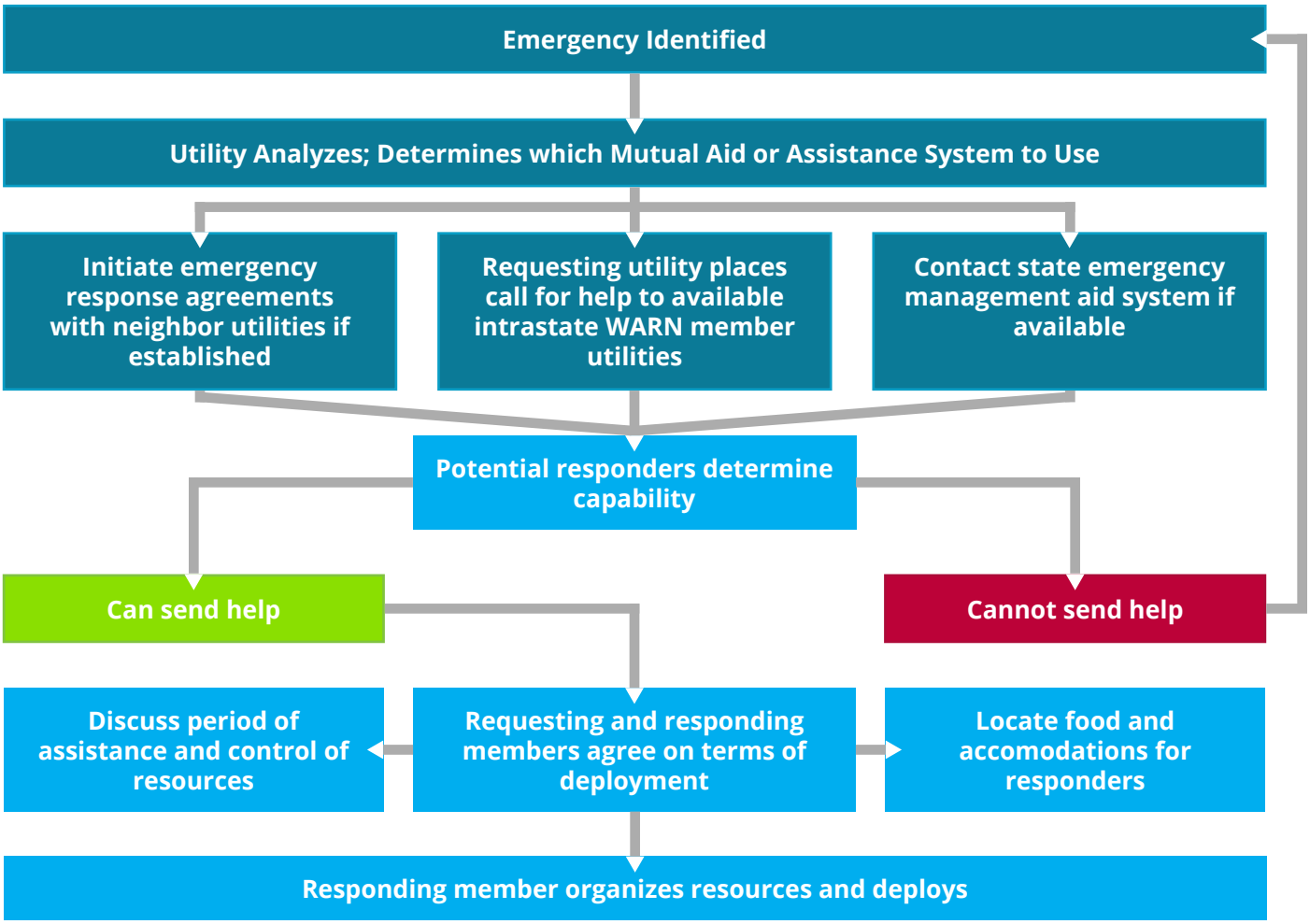
Utility Activation of WARN: Mutual Aid/Assistance Process Flow Diagram

Following an incident, each Member utility initiates a damage assessment and evaluates its resource needs. When a Member utility determines that mutual aid/assistance is warranted, it has two options for receiving mutual aid and assistance: local mutual aid agreements or UT-WARN.

A utility may have as many as three options for obtaining assistance, including local mutual aid agreements, the WARN Agreement, or any existing Statewide Master Mutual Aid Agreement.



Who Activates UTWARN?

Any Member utility of the UTWARN Agreement can determine that it needs the assistance of another Member utility and therefore decide to activate the WARN Agreement. (See Attachment A: Requesting Utility Checklist.) The WARN Agreement can be activated by a utility-to-utility request, or by contacting the UTWARN administration.

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Utility Activation of WARN: Continued

Activation occurs when one Member utility calls another Member utility to discuss the exchange of resources. A Member utility activating the WARN Agreement is referred to as the Requesting Utility. When the resources of a Responding Utility fill the need of the Requesting Utility, the Authorized Representatives confer and agree on the terms of deployment.

What is Activated?

The UTWARN Agreement provides the terms of reimbursement to the Responding Utility and a release of liability for services provided. It does not determine the response times, amenities provided to the Responding Utility, or any other operations-specific needs. In addition, the UTWARN Agreement does not dictate the activation of the EOC of the Responding Utility. These items are determined by dialogue between the Requesting Utility and a Responding Utility at the time of the emergency.

Pre-Event Activation

Some types of emergencies (e.g. severe storms or hurricanes) can be characterized as “warning” or “notice” events due to a build-up of intensity over time and/or scientific methods of predicting an event. This type of event allows Member utilities to anticipate the magnitude of damage and therefore response needs. Activating prior to the disaster opens the lines of communication and coordination among Member utilities which helps to ensure a timely and proactive response. The Requesting Utility can initiate the following activities:

- Notify Member utilities of the expected conditions
- Maintain contact with Member utilities about changing conditions and information
- Receive requested resources and identify follow-up actions

Other disasters provide no warning or notice (e.g. earthquakes), or end up impacting a utility in a greater way than anticipated (e.g. flash flooding). Activations during these events do not have the added benefit of pre-event planning.

Notification

Notification occurs when a Requesting Utility notifies a Member utility or UT-WARN admiistration that they need resources. Initial communication occurs via a phone call, Web database, Web-based discussion board or other methods. Verbal notifications between Requesting and Responding Utilities will be confirmed via written communication (fax or e-mail) using Attachment B: WARN Emergency Notification Form. The utility requesting mutual aid/assistance gathers the following information:

- Type of incident
- Impact on utility
- Number of agencies in response
- Known limitations or restrictions
- Available communication tools

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Utility Activation of WARN: Continued

In all cases in which the UTWARN Agreement is activated, participating Member utilities notify the UTWARN Response Team or Steering Committee that the request has been made and met with resources from another member.

Response to a Request for Assistance

A Member utility is not obligated to respond to a request. Once a Member utility receives a request for assistance, the Authorized Representative evaluates whether or not to respond. The Authorized Representative considers these questions:

- Does my utility have the resource requested?
- Do the resources meet the operational requirements that the Requesting Utility identified ?
- Does this event impact normal operation?
- If we provide resources, can we maintain our ability to respond to unanticipated needs?

If the Authorized Representative determines that resources are available to respond to the Requesting Utility, thereafter the Member utility is referred to as a Responding Utility. The Authorized Representative of the Responding Utility communicates, as soon as possible, with the Requesting Utility that it is available to respond and provides the approximate arrival time of such assistance. When possible, the Authorized Representatives of both the Requesting and Responding Utilities will confirm all verbal agreements with written documentation (fax or e-mail).
In addition, the Authorizing Representatives will clarify and agree upon the following items:

- Requesting Utility's ability to provide care and shelter (food, sleeping arrangements, first aid, etc.) for personnel and resources,
- Reimbursement process to determine whether the Responding Utility follows the reimbursement article of the WARN Agreement, and
- What aid the Responding Utility can provide, the cost, and confirmation of the approval from the Authorized Representative and the Member utility's management to provide aid.

If agreement is reached on the above items, the Authorized Representatives will complete and transmit the appropriate authorization forms.

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