Infection Prevention During a Water Outage

Eli DeLille RN BSN
Director of Regulatory Accreditation
Holzer Health System
Conflict of Interest Statement:

The author certifies that he has no real or perceived conflicts of interest that relate to this presentation.
Overview:

- Holzer notified of water outage impacting the city of Gallipolis June 2, 2014 at 8:30 am
  - Holzer immediately converts to water storage tank use, and turns off supply line from city
- Boil water advisory issued at June 2, 2014 at 11:33 and water is considered unsafe for consumption (non-potable)
Day 1:

- Water conservation efforts are announced
  - Poor compliance
  - Severity of issue not fully realized
  - Incident command team not yet formed
  - Communication between local, regional and state entities inconsistent
    - Potable versus non-potable water and it’s uses
Day 2:

• Holzer Gallipolis water supply tank at low levels for continued hospital boiler operation on June 3, 2014 at 7:30 am

• Decision made to contact Fire Departments to transport water (shock process)
  • Initially the local health department approved the transported water for all use (potable)
  • Ohio Department of Health rescinded approval and stated all water transported by Fire Department was non-potable
Water Statistics

7 Fire Departments
4 evenings of shuttling
1839 miles driven
427,150 gallons shuttled
The Problem:

• Non-potable water was added to our closed system: how to safely continue operations???
  • Hand Hygiene
  • Bathing
  • Surgical Cases
  • Decontamination/Sterilization
  • Drinking Water
  • Environmental cleaning
Hand Hygiene:
Bathing:

Prepackaged Bathing

Comfort Bath® premoistened, rinse-free washcloths deliver one-step, hygienic cleansing

Eliminate basins—a CAUTI risk factor for bathing
Surgical Cases:

Initially all cases were completed using sterile product

- Not viable for long term use
- Any non-emergent case were rescheduled to an alternate system Operating Room (OR)
- Gallipolis OR team on call with 2 sets of instruments available for emergent cases
Decontamination/Sterilization

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) states non-potable water unsafe for use in decontamination/sterilization.

- All contaminated instruments transported to alternate sites for processing.
- Efforts coordinated so a minimum of one back up set was always at the Gallipolis site for an emergent case.
Drinking Water

Bottled water proved to all patients and staff. Some issues that arose:

• Distribution
• Supply
• Theft
• Requests from employees for family members/friends/community
Environmental Cleaning:

![Image of Hydrogen Peroxide Cleaner Disinfectant Wipes]

- Kills bacteria and viruses* in 30 seconds**
- Holzer Healthcare

*For use in healthcare environments only. **Tested per CDC procedures.
What we learned:

• Initiate the IC process early
• Communicate constantly
• Involve front line staff
  • They better understand the challenges and have great input/feedback!
• Don’t be afraid to ask for help
• Have a copy of this document!!!
What we learned:

- Better Understanding of Water Shuttle Capabilities
- Investigation and Coordination of dual sources of water.
Outcomes:

Coordination of services resulted in:

• Minimal impact on overall operations.
  • Being a healthcare system enabled us to continue to provide care to our community

• Zero increase in Healthcare Associated Infections
  • Increased monitoring for 90 days post event
Questions?