TIPS: For Combating
Misinformation
ONLINE

MONITOR
Your Accounts

It's not enough to just set up a Facebook page or Twitter account. At least one person should be designated to check the utility's accounts on a daily basis. The same person should be responsible for posting information and responding to posts. Employees who have their own social media accounts should also be encouraged to report misinformation or complaints that they spot online.

Get READY

Identify Worst Case Scenarios that could negatively affect your agency - water contamination, responses to rate changes, watermain breaks, flooding or storm damage, etc. Create general guidelines for how the utility will respond.

#HotTopics

Be aware of what is going on in the news, your community, and your business. Hashtags are an easy way to search for specific topics on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. For instance, after an oil spill in Glendive, MT, many people used **#OilSpill** in their Facebook posts and tweets. Flood fighters in Fargo, ND have shared photos and information about flood conditions with **#FargoFlood**. You can search specific hashtags on individual social media sites or use a website like **TagBoard.com** to simultaneously search multiple sites.

DON'T DELAY

During emergencies such as water contamination, uncertainty can spur people to find other sources of information about the situation. The longer an organization waits to respond, an increasing number of rumors will fill the gaps left by official channels of information such as your social media accounts.

Be CLEAR

Mandatory water conservation measures *could* be in place for several days

vs.

Mandatory water conservation measures *will* be in place *for as many as ___ days.*

X

✓

Consider Visuals

Be Open to Using Infographics, Photos, and Videos to Share Information.

An infographic could be the perfect way to explain what "essential use" means when water conservation is necessary. And simple cell phone photos or videos can be used to quickly clear up misinformation. As an example, let's say there are complaints that the public works department isn't fixing potholes in a timely manner. Posting or tweeting a photo of crews working on the problem can immediately convey the truth.