5 WAYS UTILITY COMPANIES CAN HELP FIRST RESPONDERS IN A CRISIS

After a storm, first responders depend on the quick restoration of utilities. With the following capabilities, utility companies can better collaborate with first response teams to restore services and provide relief to victims.

1 SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

Traditionally, the government relies on "screen scraping" techniques to track outages, which gives 85% visibility. That means 15% of the grid could be left dark without response team awareness. If utility companies made outage data available, first response teams would know where, when, and how to provide support to the community.

2 STANDARDIZED FORMATTING

Utility data is not always formatted the same. Utility data can be standardized either on the utility provider level or the software level. Utility companies can follow the Common Information Model, to report outages based on the International Electrotechnical Commission's guidelines. Or, the software can use the proper APIs to translate data.

3 REAL-TIME ALERTS

Without access to real-time outage data, responders cannot adequately determine where to direct their resources, and utility companies cannot efficiently restore service. Real-time data is necessary to address events as they happen, and targeted alerts sent to the right people at the right time vastly improves relief and restoration efforts.

4 A COMMON OPERATIONAL PICTURE

When teams share a common operational picture, everyone is in the loop, and teams work collaboratively. A common operational picture does not mean that everyone should see everything. Instead, data is available based on role and location to ensure the right people see the right data, right when they need it most.

5 SIMPLE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

People on the ground need to be able to communicate quickly and efficiently about the data they receive. Simplified messaging and communication channels can help increase the actionability of data by enabling quick chat-like conversations regarding tasks without jumping to different messaging apps and without losing the historic record of what transpired.

Shared data is a crucial tool for utility operations to communicate with first responders when citizens are in need. The data itself is abundant, but software upgrades, data formatting, and communication channels are necessary for these teams to collaborate effectively. To learn more, visit www.coolfiresolutions.com.