



## ACTIVATION OF PUBLIC EMERGENCY MASS NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS

**April 30, 2014**

*NOTE: This information was created as broad guidance and should be used to develop and tailor individual Department Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) as appropriate.*

The purpose of this guidance document is to describe the processes required to request a message be sent through the Public Emergency Notification Systems (Systems). The Systems consist of **Alert LA County**, which is coordinated through the Emergency Management Department (EMD), and **Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)**, which are coordinated through the Emergency Management Department (EMD), in coordination with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Real Time Analysis & Critical Response Division (RACR).

Alert LA County is a mass notification system used to disseminate information to a constituency about emergency and non-emergency events and incidents. This system delivers messages to hard-wire telephone and TeleTypewriter (TTY) or Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TTD) devices. Cell phones, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), text messages, and e-mail messages can also be delivered through this system if those devices are registered through [www.alert.lacounty.gov](http://www.alert.lacounty.gov).

Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) is a national emergency alert system that sends concise, text-like messages, which has a unique audible signal and vibration cadence to WEA-capable mobile devices.

The Systems will be used only when the public is being asked to take some action (e.g. evacuate, prepare to evacuate, shelter in place, boil tap water before drinking).

Alert LA County messages are coordinated through EMD. Messages must be reviewed, deemed significant, and approved by EMD General Manager, Assistant General Manager, or Duty Officer, prior to being sent.

Wireless Emergency Alerts are coordinated through EMD in cooperation with the LAPD RACR.

Please revise the Mass Notification Systems Template SOP (See attachment 1) for language that may assist a Department in creating a Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on how to request a message to be sent through the Public Emergency Notification Systems.

If you have questions regarding this guidance document, please contact:

**Emergency Management Department**  
Attention: Public Information Officer  
200 N. Spring Street, Room 1533, Los Angeles, CA 90012  
(213) 484-4800

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT  
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

**ACTIVATION OF PUBLIC EMERGENCY MASS NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS**

**I. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) is to describe the processes required to request a message be sent through the Public Emergency Notification Systems (Systems). The Systems consist of **Alert LA County**, which is coordinated through the Emergency Management Department (EMD), and **Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)**, which are coordinated through the Emergency Management Department (EMD), in coordination with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) Real Time Analysis & Critical Response Division (RACR).

**II. SYSTEM DEFINITIONS**

- Alert LA County is a mass notification system used to disseminate information to a constituency about emergency and non-emergency events and incidents. This system delivers messages to hard-wire telephone and TeleTYpewriter (TTY) or Telecommunication Device for the Deaf (TTD) devices. Cell phones, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), text messages, and e-mail messages can also be delivered through this system if those devices are registered through [www.alert.lacounty.gov](http://www.alert.lacounty.gov).
- Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) is a national emergency alert system that sends concise, text-like messages, which has a unique audible signal and vibration cadence to WEA-capable mobile devices.

**III. SCOPE/APPLICABILITY**

Strict protocols and governance measures have been implemented to ensure the Systems remain as effective as possible. Primary among these protocols will be designating those incidents/emergencies for which the system is permitted to be activated.

Systems activation is limited to:

- Imminent Threat to Life or Property
- Disaster Notifications
- Evacuation Notices and/or Information
- Public Health Emergencies
- Other notifications to a defined community, as approved and deemed significant by the EMD General Manager, Assistant General Manager, or Duty Officer.

The Systems will be used only when the public is being asked to take some action (e.g. evacuate, prepare to evacuate, shelter in place, boil tap water before drinking).

**IV. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Alert LA County messages are coordinated through EMD. Messages must be reviewed, deemed significant, and approved by EMD General Manager, Assistant General Manager, or Duty Officer, prior to being sent.
- Wireless Emergency Alerts are coordinated through EMD in cooperation with the LAPD RACR.

## V. PROCEDURE

### Alert LA County

- If the City of Los Angeles Emergency Operations Center (EOC) **IS NOT** activated, complete the Alert LA County Worksheet (Attachment A) and contact the EMD Duty Officer at (213) 200-6414.
- If the City of Los Angeles EOC **IS** activated, complete the Alert LA County Worksheet (Attachment A) and contact EOC Public Information Officer (PIO) through your department's EOC responder or your Department Operations Center (DOC).

### Wireless Emergency Alerts

- If the **EOC IS NOT** activated, complete the worksheet (Attachment B) and contact the EMD Duty Officer at (213) 200-6414.
- If the EOC **IS** activated, complete the worksheet (Attachment B) and contact EOC Public Information Officer through your department's EOC responder or your DOC.

## VI. IMPLEMENTATION & TRAINING

- EMD is responsible for the development and presentation of a training program on the proper use of this SOP.
- Each department will identify a sufficient number of individuals to attend this training. At a minimum, a department's EOC responders, DOC responders, and PIOs should attend the training session.
- Any changes to this SOP will be communicated to a department's EOC responders, DOC responders and PIOs and/or those trained in the train-the-trainer program if implemented.
- This SOP will be exercised as determined by EMD.

## VII. MAINTENANCE

- This SOP shall be reviewed annually or after each use of the Alert LA County or WEA Systems.
- Upon revision, this SOP will be forwarded to the EMD General Manager for review and approval.
- EMD is responsible for maintaining this SOP.
- Any changes to this SOP will be communicated to a department's EOC responders, DOC responders and PIOs and/or those trained in the train-the-trainer program if implemented.

## VIII. RECORD OF CHANGES

Each revision(s) to this SOP must be recorded in the following table. Upon approval, all affected parties will be notified.

Date	Section	Description	Changed By

**IX. DISTRIBUTION**

This SOP will be distributed to:

- All EMD staff.
- All City Emergency Management Coordinators and those in similar positions.
- Emergency Management Committee members.
- Emergency Operations Board members.

**X. APPROVED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**XI. REFERENCES**

- Alert LA County User Guide (May 6, 2013)
- Wireless Emergency Alerts User Guide (Under Development)
- Mass Notification System Procedures (July 26, 2012)
- Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department Field Operation Directive (December 28, 2011)

**XII. ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment A - Alert LA County Worksheet  
Attachment B –Wireless Emergency Alerts Worksheet

Attachment A - Alert LA County Worksheet

FINAL (02-25-2014)



**CITY OF LOS ANGELES**  
**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**  
 Duty Officer: (213) 200-6414  
[emddutyofficer@lacity.org](mailto:emddutyofficer@lacity.org)

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ TIME: \_\_\_\_\_

TYPE OF THREAT:     FIRE     LAW     OTHER \_\_\_\_\_

**REQUESTOR INFORMATION**

REQUESTING AGENCY: \_\_\_\_\_

REQUESTOR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT NUMBER    (    )    ALTERNATE NUMBER    (    )

**CRITERIA FOR SENDING A MASS NOTIFICATION USING ALERT LA COUNTY**

Determine whether Alert LA County will be the most effective means of notifying the public.

- **SEVERITY** – Is there a significant threat to public safety and life?
- **PUBLIC PROTECTION** – Is there a need for members of the public to take protective action?
- **WARNING** – Is there need to provide warning information to the public?
- **TIMING** – Does the situation require immediate public knowledge to avoid adverse impacts?
- **GEOGRAPHICAL AREA** – Is the situation limited to a defined geographical area?
- **TRADITIONAL MEDIA INADEQUATE** – Are television, radio or other forms of traditional media viable alternatives for timely delivery of emergency information for this incident?

**AREA TO BE NOTIFIED**  
 Give notification area boundaries by street name or measurement around an intersection.

<u>STREET BOUNDARIES</u>	<u>AREA AROUND AN INTERSECTION/POINT</u>
NORTH _____	MEASUREMENT _____ Miles/Feet
SOUTH _____	<b><u>INTERSECTION/POINT</u></b>
EAST _____	CROSS STREET 1 _____
WEST _____	CROSS STREET 2 _____

If a map is available, attach it showing the area to be notified.

**MESSAGING INFORMATION**

TYPE OF WARNING: \_\_\_\_\_

PROTECTIVE ACTION: \_\_\_\_\_

These alerts must include the following information:

- Who is sending the alert
- What is happening
- Who is affected
- What action to take

**INITIAL AUDIO MESSAGE**

All messages are limited to 30 seconds. The message must start with who is issuing the message  
The message must close with "Press '1' to acknowledge the receipt of this message."

*This is the City of Los Angeles.*

*Press '1' to acknowledge the receipt of this message.*

**INITIAL TEXT MESSAGE**

Text messages are limited to 140 characters (including punctuation and spaces).  
The message must start with who is issuing the message.


**CLOSING-THE-LOOP AUDIO MESSAGE**

All messages are limited to 30 seconds. The message must start with who is issuing the message  
The message must close with "Press '1' to acknowledge the receipt of this message."

*This is the City of Los Angeles.*

*Press '1' to acknowledge the receipt of this message.*

**CLOSING-THE-LOOP TEXT MESSAGE**

Text messages are limited to 140 characters (including punctuation and spaces).  
The message must start with who is issuing the message.




