



Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs)

WHAT ARE WIRELESS EMERGENCY ALERTS?

- Wireless Emergency Alerts, or WEAs, are free messages sent directly to your cell phone, warning you about severe weather, AMBER Alerts and threats to safety in your area.
- WEAs are sent to you by your state and local public safety officials, the National Weather Service, the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children and the President.
- WEAs are a new technology and may already be on your wireless cell phone or other wireless device.
- WEAs are no more than 90 characters and will provide brief critical information about a threat in your location or an AMBER emergency.
- The WEA notification is designed to get your attention and alert you with a unique sound and vibration.
- WEAs resemble a text message on your cell phone or other wireless device – but WEAs will not interrupt calls in progress.
- WEA messages allow alerts to be sent to cell phones in a geographically targeted affected area.
- WEAs are one-way alerts that are sent to any mobile device in range of the broadcasting cell tower which ensures that authorities cannot collect any data from an individual.
- WEAs are not affected by network congestion.
- Wireless customers will not be charged for the delivery of WEA messages.

UNIQUE SOUND AND VIBRATION.

- The unique sound and vibration (Common Audio Attention Signal and Vibration Pattern) you receive when a WEA message is broadcast are prescribed in part 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations for use in Alert messaging only.
- The unique sound and vibration cadence are particularly helpful to people with hearing or vision-related disabilities.

WILL I RECEIVE WEAs ON MY CELL PHONE?

- WEA messages can save lives. Do not ignore these messages!
- WEAs contain basic information so if you receive a WEA, seek additional information from the other sources, such as radio or TV.
- To find out if your Mobile device is capable of receiving WEA alerts, contact your cellular service or check out www.ctia.org/WEA
- All the major cell carriers are participating in WEA on a voluntary basis.
- As with all new cellular services, it will take time for upgrades in infrastructure, coverage and handset technology to allow WEAs to reach all cellular customers.
- Wireless carriers are currently selling mobile devices with WEA capability included; however, not all handsets now on the market are capable of receiving WEAs.
- For more information on WEA Alerts, go to Ready.gov: <http://www.ready.gov/alerts>.
- To find out more about how your mobile device is configured, contact your local carrier or device manufacturer.

HOW DO AUTHORITIES REGISTER TO SEND WEA ALERTS?

- Government agencies at the federal, state, local, tribal or territorial level wishing to utilize WEA must execute a Memorandum of Agreement with the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA's) Integrated Public Warning and Alert System (IPAWS) program. Information about the application process can be found on the IPAWS website.
- Alerting Authorities will not be charged by wireless carriers for sending WEA messages.

For more information: <http://www.fema.gov/ipaws>

To contact the IPAWS Program Management Office: ipaws@fema.dhs.gov