

Integrated Public Alert and Warning System



FEMA

FACT SHEET

Emergency Alerts Anytime, Anywhere



About IPAWS

The Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) will use 21st century technologies to warn the public about a potential disaster. Citizens can be alerted anytime, anywhere—enhancing their ability to quickly make decisions that could save lives and property. Emergency messages will flow through multiple devices, such as cell phones, pagers, satellite television/radio, landline phones, desktop computers, personal digital assistants (PDAs), and road signs. Transmission may be audio/video or text, streaming video, live or recorded, and in different languages to meet the needs of a diverse audience.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is partnered with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to make "real-time" warnings to the public a 21st century reality.

IPAWS supports FEMA's goal to reduce losses to life and property from all hazards by providing reliable and accurate information before, during, and after an emergency.

An Improved Public Alert System

IPAWS is a system designed to improve public alert and warning. It has six components, two of which already existed but will be upgraded. The system includes:

- **Emergency Alert System (EAS) upgrades**

Upgrades the current system's reliability and overall effectiveness through satellite

technologies and increases the number of direct receipt radio stations from 34 to more than 800. The EAS can be used by the President and authorized officials to address the public in case of a national emergency. It is used on a state and local level by emergency managers to notify residents of all hazards and AMBER Alerts.



- **National Warning System (NAWAS) upgrades**
Upgrades the current 2000 site collaborative system used by emergency managers and the military to communicate with each other during an emergency. Expanding to all 50 states and upgrading technology to include survivable voice, video, and data capabilities.
- **NEW Geo-Targeted Alerting System (GTAS)**
Emergency telephone notification used to send alerts to land lines, cell phones, pagers, PDAs, electronic billboards and other devices to specific areas regarding an impending event.
- **NEW Web Alert Relay Network (WARN)**
Emergency Manager selects impacted area to receive alert. Sends alerts directly to cell phones, e-mail and pagers.
- **NEW Digital Emergency Alert System (DEAS)**
Uses data casting technology. Alerts can be sent by text, audio, and/or video to a variety of communications devices. It can be used by the President to notify the public of a national emergency and used by emergency managers on a state and/or local level to notify residents of emergencies and AMBER Alerts.

- **NEW NOAA Partnerships and Joint Programs**
Will provide NOAA weather radios to K-12 public schools in the United States to ensure they receive notification of a weather emergency. A Web Site and educational package are also being developed.

Where Is It Being Tested?

FEMA and its partners are working in conjunction with state and local emergency managers and broadcasters to test the components of the IPAWS system in the following states: Alabama, Delaware, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin. To learn more about the pilot tests, log on to www.fema.gov/emergency/IPAWS.

How Do I Get Involved?

You can get involved by being prepared NOW for an emergency. In addition, learn as much as you can about Federal, state, and local emergency management operations as it pertains to the actions you should take in case of an emergency.



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For More Information

To learn more about IPAWS, log onto www.fema.gov/emergency/IPAWS