

# TIP 34: Inquiries Regarding the Performance of WEA Geo-targeting

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As of December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2019, wireless service providers that participate in Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) were required to support “enhanced WEA geo-targeting” – delivery of a WEA alert message to 100 percent of a targeted area with no more than 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a mile (528 feet) overshoot. The industry solution included adding software to new smartphones that would allow the handset to determine whether the user was within the described alerting area before displaying the alert.

In late 2020, industry reported that approximately 18% of active smartphones are supporting enhanced WEA geo-targeting. Because smartphones and other mobile phones that do not support enhanced WEA geo-targeting remain in use, they may continue to receive WEA alerts more than 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a mile outside of the target area.

To help address questions about alerts that are delivered to phones more than 1/10<sup>th</sup> of a mile outside of the target area or phones that do not receive an alert inside the targeted area, AT&T, T-Mobile, and Verizon have established points of contact for inquiries from IPAWS authorized [Alerting Authorities](#). IPAWS authorized Alerting Authorities are also encouraged to contact the Wireless Service Providers with other inquiries concerning their performance of enhanced WEA geotargeting within your jurisdiction.

## Wireless Service Provider Contact Information

IPAWS Alerting Authorities can request the wireless service provider contact information from the IPAWS Program Management Office at [IPAWS@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:IPAWS@fema.dhs.gov).

## When You Call or E-mail

The Wireless Service Provider will only be able to address WEA geo-targeting issues. The inquiring Alerting Authority should include the following information (to the extent known) in your message:

1. Alerting Authority or government agency name and POC info (email and telephone)
2. Date/time of the alert
3. Event type/subject of alert (missing person, evacuation, tornado, flood, etc.)
4. Location of where the alert was (or was not) received, in as much detail as possible so the Wireless Service Provider can plot the polygon, circle or FIPS code against their coverage and site locations.
5. Handset model, operating system, and telephone number of device(s) affected



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## Wireless Service Provider Follow Up

Once the WEA participating Wireless Service Provider has as much information as the Alerting Authority is able to provide, they will do their diligence and follow up with the Alerting Authority as appropriate to close out the matter; most likely by phone.

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## IPAWS Tips at Your Fingertips

Find all Tips from, 2018 to the present, on the FEMA website at [IPAWS Tips](#). Share your ideas for future Tips with the IPAWS PMO at [fema-ipaws-stakeholder-engagement@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:fema-ipaws-stakeholder-engagement@fema.dhs.gov).

*The Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) is FEMA's national system for local alerting that provides authenticated emergency and life-saving information to the public through mobile phones using Wireless Emergency Alerts, to radio and television via the Emergency Alert System, and on the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Weather Radio.*