



MAHONING COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

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Media Release

The Mahoning County Emergency Management Agency wants to announce the successful implementation of the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) system.

The system allows public safety agencies to transmit emergency information via radio, television, electronic billboards and cellular phones on a variety of topics, including weather warnings, earthquakes, 911 outages, notifications of potential civil dangers or emergencies, or the need to evacuate or shelter in place. Alerts can be sent with a "geo-fence," limiting the messages to a specific geographic area.

"This will allow us to quickly transmit accurate and authenticated emergency information to Mahoning County residents, keeping them updated and safe," says Mahoning County EMA Director Andrew Frost III.

Severe weather alerts, the projected primary use of the system, originate at the National Weather Service and are activated for life safety weather warnings such as tornados and floods.

Other IPAWS alerts will originate from the Mahoning County EMA, with real time review by Ohio EMA and FEMA.

The new system will be tested in connection with the statewide tornado drill, scheduled for 9:50 a.m. March 22.

Attachment: Categories of IPAWS Alerts

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- *Administrative Message (ADR)*: non-emergency message provides updates about an event below in progress of an urgent nature (expiration, additional instructions etc.)
- *Blue Alert (BLU)*: Message to warn the public when there is actionable info related to a law enforcement officer missing or when there is an imminent, credible threat to an officer. A Blue Alert could also warn the public if a violent suspect may be locally at large and provide instructions.
- *Child Abduction Emergency (CAE)*: An emergency message, based on established criteria, about a missing child believed to be abducted. These are normally issued by the state as Amber Alerts.
- *Civil Danger Warning (CDW)*: A warning of an event that presents a danger to a significant civilian population. The CDW, has a higher priority than the Local Area Emergency (LAE). Examples include contaminated water supply and military or terrorist attack.
- *Civil Emergency Message (CEM)*: An emergency message regarding an in-progress or imminent significant threat(s) to public safety and/or property. The CEM is a higher priority message than the Local Area Emergency (LAE), but lower than the Civil Danger Warning (CDW).
- *Earthquake Warning (EQW)*: A warning of current or imminent earthquake activity.
- *Immediate Evacuation (EVI)*: A warning where immediate evacuation is recommended or ordered according to state law or local, tribal, or territorial ordinance.
- *Hazardous Materials Warning (HMW)*: A warning of a release of non-radioactive hazardous material (such as a flammable gas, toxic chemical, or biological agent).
- *Local Area Emergency (LAE)*: An emergency message that defines an event that by itself does not pose a significant threat to public safety and/or property. However, the event could escalate, contribute to other more serious events, or disrupt critical public safety services.
- *Law Enforcement Warning (LEW)*: A warning of a bomb explosion, riot or other criminal event (e.g. a jailbreak).
- *Radiological Hazard Warning (RHW)*: A warning of the loss, discovery or release of a radiological material. Examples include: the theft of a radioactive materials; a transportation (aircraft, truck or rail, etc.) accident which may involve nuclear weapons, nuclear fuel, or radioactive wastes.
- *Shelter in Place Warning (SPW)*: A warning of an event where the public is recommended to shelter in place (go inside, close doors and windows, turn off HVAC and turn on the radio or TV for more information).
- *911 Telephone Outage Emergency (TOE)*: An emergency message that notifies the public of a 911 telephone network outage by geographic area or telephone exchange.