



FEMA

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS BULLETIN

WEEK OF April 7, 2014

Important Dates and Deadlines:

[Emergency Management Performance Grant Program](#)

(Applications Due April 9, 2014)

[Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance Enters Second Phase](#)

[NFA Board of Visitors Teleconference](#)
(April 17, 2014)

In Extreme Weather, a Cell Phone Can Save a Life

The Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) is a national alert and warning infrastructure available for use by federal, state, local, tribal and territorial public alerting authorities to send various emergency alerts to citizens including Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs). Now that spring has arrived, FEMA wants to remind the public that severe weather can happen anywhere and at any time. Being aware of severe weather conditions in your area is an essential component of knowing how to prepare for the unexpected. When severe weather occurs, imminent threat weather alerts can be sent directly to cellular devices and can give users a critical window of time to find safety.

Imminent threat weather alerts are one type of WEAs that are sent directly to cellular phones. The National Weather Service Forecast Offices send imminent threat weather alerts for severe weather warnings for tornadoes, flash floods, extreme wind, tsunami, hurricane, typhoon, and dust storms. Local public safety officials may also send WEAs for a wide range of emergency warnings.

State and county alerting authorities interested in information on using IPAWS can go to www.fema.gov/emergency/ipaws.

WEA capable cell phones use a unique tone and vibration designed to grab your attention when an imminent threat is in your area. WEA alerts are free and do not require individuals to register in order to receive them. All that is needed for WEA is a wireless device that receives the 90-character WEA messages. WEAs are sent from cell towers in a warning area and resemble text messages. However, unlike text messages, WEAs use one-way cell broadcast technology that ensures the alerts will not get backlogged during times of emergency when networks are highly congested. The WEA is a "heads-up" that there is dangerous weather in the area – local radio and TV sources can provide detailed warning information about the threat.

The availability of WEA alerts will depend on a wireless carrier's network availability and if a handset is capable of receiving WEAs. To determine if a wireless device can receive WEA alerts, contact your wireless carrier for more information or visit www.ctia.org/wea. For a list of public safety agencies using WEA visit <http://www.fema.gov/integrated-public-alert-warning-system-authorities>.

State AMBER Coordinators in coordination with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children are also able to send a WEA for missing children. In addition, if ever an extreme national emergency were to occur, a Presidential WEA could be sent to wireless devices.

For the public to learn more about WEA, go to the FEMA website at <http://www.ready.gov>.

FEMA's Office of External Affairs provides this bulletin to highlight recent and upcoming program and policy activities and announcements.

Feedback is welcome at
fema-ea-bulletin@fema.dhs.gov.

Open Joint Field Offices

AK, CO, GA, MO, NC, NM, OK, SC, VT, WA
[Learn more.](#)

Sign Up for America's PrepareAthon!

Participant Spotlight

Kids from the Fun Zone Reading Club for Homeless Kids in Los Angeles, California, will learn communities practice from live action play and text from preparedness resources book.

[How are you going to participate?](#)

Wireless Emergency Alerts: Saving Lives

Last July, 29 young people and five counselors at a summer sports camp were saved by WEA alerts just second before a tornado blew off a sports dome in East Windsor, Connecticut.

Last November, WEAs saved 600 people attending a Sunday service when they were led to safety from a tornado in Washington, Illinois.

New York City issued WEAs during Hurricane Sandy on specific evacuation orders.

WEAs alerts issued shelter-in-place orders to the public as authorities searched for a suspect in Boston Marathon bombing.

Last August, a 17-month-old baby was saved by a University of North Carolina student when a baby was heard crying in stolen vehicle that matched the description outlined in an AMBER Alert the day before.

This newsletter is not intended to provide a comprehensive list of policies that are open for public comment, nor does it describe all of the instructions or requirements necessary to submit a comment. For a complete list of instructions and deadlines please click the hyperlinks included.

FEMA Enters Next Phase of Tribal Consultation on Pilot Guidance for Direct Tribal Declaration Requests under the Stafford Act

In January 2013, the Sandy Recovery Improvement Act provided federally recognized Indian tribal governments (tribal governments) the option to request a Presidential emergency or major disaster declaration independently of a state. To implement this historic provision, FEMA is initiating a second round of consultation on the working draft of the Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance with tribal governments, conducting working meetings across the country to collect thoughts and comments from tribal governments. Following this round of meetings, FEMA will revise the working draft based on the input received and will publish another draft in the Federal Register for public comment. During the Federal Register comment period, FEMA will conduct another round of tribal consultation before making the guidance final.

View and submit comments to the working draft of the [Tribal Declarations Pilot Guidance](#). More information about FEMA Tribal Affairs is available at www.fema.gov/tribal.

Thank you for your continued support. Together, we can support Indian Country in their efforts to build more resilient and better prepared communities. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact FEMA's Intergovernmental Affairs Division at (202) 646-3444 or FEMA-IGA@fema.dhs.gov.

Recapping Capstone's Largest Exercise – Alaska Shield

From **March 27-April 1, 2014**, FEMA, Federal partners, state, local and tribal governments participated in a series of exercises that tested the ability of the federal government to respond to major disasters in Alaska.

The largest of the exercises was Alaska Shield 2014. This full-scale emergency response exercise tested the plans and actions of the state of Alaska, FEMA, tribal governments, private sector companies, international partners, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions and partners.

"We do not know when the next earthquake or tsunami will take place, but it will depend on our collective and individual preparedness to reduce our vulnerability," said FEMA Regional Administrator Ken Murphy. "It is imperative that we work together in advance of an event to make sure that all of our systems are working together smoothly and seamlessly."

This exercise coincided with the 50th anniversary of the 1964 Great Alaskan Earthquake. The earthquake scenario was designed to be of sufficient complexity to disrupt the state's essential services, making it difficult for communities to obtain outside assistance but allow life safety activities to resume.

Full-scale exercises such as Alaska Shield test plans and actions during the initial response phase of a disaster. They also test the ability to stabilize the situation, meet immediate essential needs, and ensure recovery efforts can begin.

FEMA 101 – What is the Emergency Management Institute

Located on the campus of the [National Emergency Training Center](#) in Emmitsburg, Maryland, the [Emergency Management Institute](#) (EMI) is the emergency management community's flagship training institution. EMI provides training to Federal, state, local, tribal, volunteer, public and private sector officials to strengthen emergency management core competencies for professional, career-long training.

EMI trains more than two million students annually. Training delivery systems include: residential onsite training; offsite delivery in partnership with emergency management training systems, colleges, and universities; and technology-based mediums to conduct individual training courses for emergency management personnel across the nation.

Notice of Availability for Final FEMA Office of Recovery's Donated Resources Policy

The final policy establishes the criteria by which applicants will be credited for volunteer labor, donated equipment and donated materials used in the performance of eligible emergency work (Categories A and B final policy incorporates a change that allows the value of mass). The care and sheltering activities provided by a voluntary agency to be applied to the non-Federal cost share as a donated resource even when those activities are part of the organization's mission.

For more information, please visit the [Federal Register](#).

National Fire Academy to Hold Board of Visitors Teleconference

The Board of Visitors for the National Fire Academy (NFA) will meet via teleconference on **Thursday, April 17, 2014, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. EDT**. The meeting will be open to the public.

The Board meets annually to determine whether NFA programs further the U.S. Fire Administration's (USFA) missions, examine the adequacy of the NFA's facilities, and review the funding levels for NFA programs. The Board submits a written annual report, through the United States Fire Administrator, to the Administrator of FEMA.

For more information, please visit the [Federal Register](#) or the [NFA](#) website.

For the Week of April 7, 2014

Reminder: National Preparedness and Emergency Management Performance Grants Application Periods Still Open

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) announced the release of FY 2014 Funding Opportunity Announcements for six DHS preparedness grant programs totaling over \$1.6 billion.

The Homeland Security grants assist states, urban areas, tribal and territorial governments, and nonprofit organizations as well as the private sector to strengthen our nation's ability to prevent, protect against, mitigate, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks, major disasters, and other emergencies in support of the National Preparedness Goal and the National Preparedness System.

Completed final applications for these six preparedness grants are due no later than 11:59 p.m. EDT, May 23, 2014.

The Emergency Management Performance Grant Program (EMPG) assists state, local, territorial, and tribal governments in preparing for all hazards. Also, \$100,000 is available from the Disaster Relief Fund for the Federated States of Micronesia and for the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

Completed applications for the EMPG must be submitted no later than 11:59 PM EDT, April 9, 2014.

Funding opportunity announcements for FY 2014 preparedness grants and EMPG are available at www.grants.gov. For more information, please visit www.fema.gov/grants.

Reminder: FEMA to Host Virtual Public Meetings on National Flood Insurance Program Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, specifically directs federal agencies to thoroughly assess the environmental consequences of major federal actions that could significantly affect the environment. Because changes to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) are a major federal action, FEMA is undertaking the preparation of a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS).

In adherence to this law, FEMA is preparing the Impact Statement to evaluate the NFIP as it is currently implemented. The NFIP consists of three primary elements: mapping, floodplain management, and insurance. The modifications included in the Impact Statement may cover some or all of these elements.

Scoping efforts have been ongoing and FEMA is currently soliciting feedback from the public. FEMA will consider these comments, in combination with stakeholder input provided through previous and planned NFIP listening sessions, modifications to the program since the last Impact Statement was completed, and recent legislation changes in the development of the draft Impact Statement. Ultimately, the Impact Statement will chart the course for the Agency's considerations of environmental impacts in future NFIP rulemaking.

FEMA will hold virtual public meetings to provide information and take public comments on the NFIP PEIS. The meetings will be structured, as webinars, and will be held on **April 22, 2014, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. EDT**; May 13, 2014, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. EDT; and May 20, 2014, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. EDT. Information on the NFIP PEIS and instructions for online webinar registration are available on the [website](#).

Participate in the National Day of Action on April 30th

We encourage our partners to [participate](#) in the first National Day of Action on **April 30, 2014** by hosting or joining an America's PrepareAthon! event. In addition to individuals, organizations such as schools, institutions of higher education, community-based organizations, workplaces and houses of worship will be hosting events in many parts of the nation.

Learn more about America's PrepareAthon! and register for the National Day of Action at www.ready.gov/prepare and follow us on Twitter using the [@PrepareAthon](#) handle. For more information contact PrepareAthon@fema.dhs.gov.

This Week is National Volunteer Week

This year's National Volunteer Week falls on **April 6-12, 2014**. The FEMA [Citizen Corps](#) and [Community Emergency Response Team](#) (CERT) programs provide opportunities for individuals and organizations to serve their communities, making them better prepared and more resilient, and have proven to be an integral part of disaster preparedness and response efforts throughout the country. CERT volunteers learn basic disaster response skills and assist their communities to prepare for disasters and following disasters when professional responders are not immediately available to help. Citizen Corps Councils bring together community leaders, including representatives of volunteer organizations, to plan for emergencies before they happen.

With proper training, everyday citizens can expand the resources of states, tribes and local communities to help them become more resilient. There are many resources available for training and opportunities for volunteering, including getting trained in basic first aid and CPR through the local [American Red Cross](#) chapter or finding a volunteer opportunity through the [National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster \(VOAD\)](#) and the [Corporation for National and Community Service](#)

The mission of the Office of External Affairs (OEA) is to engage, inform, and educate all of FEMA's stakeholders in support of the Agency's programs and initiatives to achieve its mission. OEA accomplishes its mission by coordinating and maintaining visibility of public and internal communications; advising FEMA program and support offices on decision-making regarding policies, plans, and actions that affect stakeholder, media, and Congressional audiences; and organizing outreach efforts targeted at principal stakeholders to include local, state, territorial, and tribal governments, the private sector, national organizations and associations, and the American public.



U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Federal Emergency Management Agency
Office of External Affairs