

FEMA Marks 10th Anniversary of Wireless Emergency Alerts

FEMA's Integrated Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) is celebrating the 10th anniversary of Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA). WEA is a tool for authorized government agencies to reach the American public via cell phones during emergencies.

More than 70,000 WEAs Sent

The alerts are created and sent by authorized federal, state, local, tribal and territorial government agencies through IPAWS to participating wireless providers, which deliver the alerts to compatible handsets in geo-targeted areas. To help ensure that these alerts are accessible to the entire public, including people with disabilities, the alerts are accompanied by a unique tone and vibration.

In 2007, FEMA began modernizing the nation's public alert and warning system by integrating new technologies into the existing alert systems. The new system, IPAWS, became operational in 2011. The first WEA was sent on June 28, 2012 by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for a Flash Flood Warning in the Santa Fe, New Mexico area. Since then, more than 70,000 WEAs have been sent over IPAWS.

The system now supports more than 1,700 federal, state, local, tribal and territorial users through a standardized message format. IPAWS enables public safety alerting authorities such as emergency managers, police, and fire departments to send the same alert and warning message over multiple communication pathways at the same time to people in harm's way, helping to save lives.

A brief video of FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell speaking about the WEA anniversary is available at [F1 IPAWS 10th Anniversary Video - YouTube](#).

For more information on FEMA's IPAWS, visit www.fema.gov/ipaws and www.ready.gov/alerts.

Contact Us

If you have any questions, please contact FEMA Office of External Affairs:

- Congressional Affairs at (202) 646-4500 or at FEMA-Congressional-Affairs@fema.dhs.gov
- Intergovernmental Affairs at (202) 646-3444 or at FEMA-IGA@fema.dhs.gov
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