

Office of External Affairs
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Washington, DC 20472

Office of Media Relations
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554



FEMA Media Contacts:

FEMA News Desk, (202) 646-3272, Fema-News-Desk@fema.dhs.gov

FCC Media Contacts:

FCC Office Of Media Relations, (202) 418-0500, Mediarelations@fcc.gov

For Immediate Release

Oct. 3, 2023

News Release

FEMA and FCC Plan Nationwide Emergency Alert Test for Oct. 4; Test Messages Will be Sent to TVs, Radios and Cell Phones

WASHINGTON – FEMA, in coordination with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), will conduct a [nationwide test](#) of the [Emergency Alert System](#) (EAS) and [Wireless Emergency Alerts](#) (WEA) tomorrow, Oct. 4.

The national test will consist of two portions, testing WEA and EAS capabilities. Both tests are scheduled to begin at approximately 2:20 p.m. ET on Wednesday, Oct. 4.

The WEA portion of the test will be directed to consumer cell phones. This will be the third nationwide test, but the second test to all WEA-compatible cellular devices. The test message will display in either English or in Spanish, depending on the language settings of the wireless handset.

The EAS portion of the test will be sent to radios and televisions. This will be the seventh nationwide EAS test.

FEMA and the FCC are coordinating with EAS participants, wireless providers, emergency managers and other stakeholders in preparation for this national test to minimize confusion and maximize the public safety value of the test.

The purpose of the test is to ensure that the systems continue to be effective means of warning the public about emergencies, particularly those on the national level. In case the Oct. 4 test is postponed, due to widespread severe weather or other significant events, the back-up testing date is Oct. 11.

The WEA portion of the test will be initiated using [FEMA's Integrated Public Alert and Warning System \(IPAWS\)](#), a centralized internet-based system administered by FEMA that enables authorities to send authenticated emergency messages to the public through multiple communications networks. The WEA test will be administered via a code sent to cell phones.

This year the EAS message will be disseminated as a Common Alerting Protocol (CAP) message via the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System-Open Platform for Emergency Networks (IPAWS-OPEN).

All wireless phones should receive the message only once. The following can be expected from the nationwide WEA test:

- Beginning at approximately 2:20 p.m. ET, cell towers will broadcast the test for approximately 30 minutes. During this time, WEA-compatible wireless phones that are switched on, within range of an active cell tower, and in a geographic area where the wireless provider participates in WEA, should be capable of receiving the test message.
- For consumers, the message that appears on their phones will read: "THIS IS A TEST of the National Wireless Emergency Alert System. No action is needed."
- Phones with the main menu set to Spanish will display: "ESTA ES UNA PRUEBA del Sistema Nacional de Alerta de Emergencia. No se necesita acción."
- Similar to when your phone receives an Amber Alert, the WEA alert tone is generally only played when the alert is initially received by the phone and on some devices stops as soon as the user clicks a button.
- If a phone is off before the test alert is sent and not turned back on until after the WEA Test expires (approximately 30 minutes), the phone should not get the test message.

WEA 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.

Important information about the EAS test:

- The EAS portion of the test is scheduled to last approximately one minute and will be conducted with the participation of radio and television broadcasters, cable systems, satellite radio and television providers and wireline video providers.
- The test message will be similar to the regular monthly EAS test messages with which the public is familiar. It will state: “This is a nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System, issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, covering the United States from 14:20 to 14:50 hours ET. This is only a test. No action is required by the public.

Note to Broadcast Outlets:

Please do not include the tones or Attention Signals in broadcast TV or radio coverage about the Nationwide Emergency Alert Test being conducted on Oct. 4, 2023. Doing so could result in a violation of federal regulations, which prohibit the use of Emergency Alert System codes (which are audible tones) or the EAS and WEA Attention Signals, or simulations of them, except in actual emergencies, authorized tests of the EAS, or authorized Public Service Announcements (PSAs).

###