Emergency Alert System (EAS)

The Emergency Alert System is a national public warning system commonly used by state and local authorities to deliver important emergency information, such as weather and AMBER alerts, to affected communities over television and radio. Emergency Alert System participants – radio and television broadcasters, cable systems, satellite radio and television providers, and wireline video providers – deliver state and local alerts on a voluntary basis, but they are required to deliver Presidential alerts, which enable the President to address the public during a national emergency. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the FCC work collaboratively to maintain the Emergency Alert System and Wireless Emergency Alerts, which are the two main components of the national public warning system. Authorized federal, state, and local authorities create the alerts that are transmitted through the system.

The majority of Emergency Alert System alerts originate from the National Weather Service through the National Weather Radio in response to severe weather events, but an increasing number of alerts are also being sent by state, local, territorial, and tribal authorities through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Integrated Public Alert and Warning System.

FEMA is responsible for any national-level activation and tests of the Emergency Alert System.

What is the FCC's role in the Emergency Alert System?

The FCC's establishes performance standards for Emergency Alert System participants, procedures for participants to follow in the event the system is activated, and testing requirements for participants. The FCC does not create or transmit alerts.

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