

Press Office  
U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
500 C Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20472



**FEMA**

September 26, 2016

HQ-16-068  
Contact: FEMA News Desk  
Phone: 202-646-3272

FCC media contact:  
Rochelle Cohen  
[rochelle.cohen@fcc.gov](mailto:rochelle.cohen@fcc.gov)  
202-418-1162

**For Immediate Release**

**Nationwide Emergency Alert System Test Planned for September 28  
FEMA and FCC Issue Reminder and Key Points about Test**

WASHINGTON – As a reminder, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in coordination with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), will conduct a mandatory nationwide test of the [Emergency Alert System \(EAS\)](#) on **Wednesday, September 28, at 2:20 p.m. EDT**. In light of the upcoming test, the agencies share the following key informational points:

- The purpose of the [nationwide test](#) is to ensure that EAS remains an effective means of warning the public about emergencies. Periodic testing of public alert and warning systems helps to assess the operational readiness of alerting infrastructure and identify any needed technological and administrative improvements.
- The nationwide test will be administered by FEMA, in cooperation with the FCC and National Weather Service, and with the participation of radio, broadcast TV, cable, satellite, and other service providers (known as “EAS Participants”). EAS Participants are required to file reports with the FCC after the test, which the agency will analyze to determine how the test performed.
- FEMA’s test message will be similar to the regular monthly EAS test messages in that the public should receive both audio and on-screen text conveying that this is only a test. Specific language will differ slightly as it will indicate that, “This is a *national* test of the Emergency Alert System. This is only a test.” (emphasis added.)

- The test message will be transmitted in both English and Spanish, with EAS Participants deciding which version to use for their communities. The test is intended to last approximately one minute.
- How EAS works: Emergency alerts are created by authorized government agencies and sent to local radio and video service providers by local connections or through a central system administered by FEMA. The radio and video service providers then disseminate the emergency alert messages to affected communities. The FCC prescribes technical and procedural rules for communications providers' participation in this process.
- Public safety officials need to be sure that in times of an emergency or disaster, they have reliable methods and systems that will deliver urgent alerts and warnings to the public when needed. Conducting regional and national testing supports the continued use, training, and improvement of the system.
- Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) will not be part of the test.
- The back-up date for the test is October 5, 2016, in case the September 28 test is cancelled due to widespread severe weather or other significant events.
- The test was first officially announced on [July 18, 2016](#). FEMA and the FCC have been coordinating with EAS Participants and other stakeholders in preparation for the test.

September is [National Preparedness Month](#). In addition to conducting the nationwide EAS test, FEMA and the FCC encourage individuals to take action to prepare now and throughout the year. While government plays a role, each of us - including individuals, organizations and businesses - has important things we can do to be ready for the unexpected. Take time this month to be better prepared by following these steps:

- **Make an emergency plan** so families know how to reconnect and reunite when an emergency strikes.
- **Download the FEMA App** for disaster resources and to receive weather alerts, safety tips, and reminders (in English and Spanish) so you can have peace of mind and be ready for the unexpected.
- **Practice your preparedness.** In case you are not with your family during an emergency, practice how you will communicate with each other; [digitize important documents](#) and plan a safety drill or exercise at your place of work.
- **Visit Ready.gov.** There are easy-to-use tools and resources available for families, organizations and communities for many disasters, to include floods, tornadoes, hurricanes and wildfires at Ready.gov.

###

**Office of Media Relations: (202) 418-0500**  
**TTY: (888) 835-5322**  
**Twitter: @FCC**  
**[www.fcc.gov/office-media-relations](http://www.fcc.gov/office-media-relations)**

*This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action. See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).*

