



PUBLIC NOTICE

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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION REMINDS EAS PARTICIPANTS ABOUT NOVEMBER 9, 2011 NATIONWIDE EAS TEST

Announces Activation of Nationwide EAS Test Electronic Reporting System and Release of Nationwide EAS Test Handbook

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) reminds Emergency Alert System (EAS) Participants (*e.g.*, broadcasters, cable operators, satellite radio and television service providers and wireline video service providers)¹ that on November 9, 2011, at 2:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST), the FCC and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will conduct the first-ever Nationwide EAS Test. The purpose of the test is to assess the reliability and effectiveness of the EAS as a way to alert the public of national emergencies. The test is diagnostic in nature and is intended to allow the FCC and FEMA to determine how well the nationwide EAS works and to make improvements if necessary.

Under the FCC's rules, all EAS Participants must participate in the nationwide test and must submit test result data to the FCC no later than December 27, 2011 (*i.e.*, 45 days following the test).² EAS Participants may file the required test result data either in paper format or electronically. EAS Participants that choose to file paper submissions must do so no later than December 27, 2011, and must file an original and one copy of each filing with the Commission by hand, messenger delivery, commercial overnight courier, or by first class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail addressed to the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, ATTN: Nationwide EAS Test, 445 12th Street, SW, Washington DC 20554. EAS Participants must mark the top of each page of their submissions: "Confidential – Not for Public Inspection."³

¹ See 47 CFR § 11.2(c).

² 47 CFR §11.61(a)(3). See also Review of the Emergency Alert System, EB Docket No. 04-296, *Third Report and Order*, 26 FCC Rcd 1460, 1481 (2011)(*Third Report and Order*). The *Third Report and Order* established a mandatory manual reporting system to provide for the collection of data from the Nationwide EAS Test and announced that the Commission would institute a voluntary, electronic reporting system closer to the test date. Test result data filed under either system is presumptively confidential. *Id.* at 1488.

³ U.S. Postal Service first-class, Express, and Priority mail must be addressed to 445 12th Street, SW, Washington DC 20554. Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9300 East Hampton Drive, Capitol Heights, MD 20743. All hand-delivered or messenger-delivered paper filings for the Commission's Secretary must be delivered to FCC Headquarters at 445 12th St., SW, Room TWA325, Washington, DC 20554. The filing hours are 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

To facilitate a less burdensome electronic filing mechanism, the Commission announces the activation of the Nationwide EAS Test Reporting System. This system is a voluntary web-based reporting system that will collect information from EAS Participants on the results of the Nationwide EAS Test.⁴ The Nationwide EAS Test Reporting System is comprised of the following three web-based forms:

- Form 1 will ask each EAS Participant for identifying and background information, including EAS designation, EAS monitoring assignments, facility location, equipment type, and contact information. Form 1 will be available beginning today, the date of this Public Notice, and will remain available throughout the reporting period, until December 27, 2011.
- Form 2 will ask each EAS Participant whether it received the Nationwide EAS Test alert code and, if required to do so, whether the EAS Participant propagated the alert code downstream. Form 2 will be available beginning November 9, the day of the Nationwide EAS Test, and will remain available throughout the reporting period, until December 27, 2011.
- Form 3 will ask each EAS Participant to submit detailed information regarding its receipt and propagation, if applicable, of the alert code, including an explanation of any complications in receiving or propagating the code. Such details will include what time (including time zone) the code was received, the time of retransmission of the code, and the source from which the code was received. EAS Participants must have filled out Form 1 to be able to access Form 3. Form 3 will be available simultaneously with Form 2 on Wednesday, November 9, 2011, and will remain available throughout the reporting period, until December 27, 2011.

EAS Participants may fill out the forms in the Nationwide EAS Test Reporting System any time from when each form becomes available until December 27, 2011, when EAS Participants' final reports are due to the Commission. However, the Commission strongly encourages EAS Participants to fill out the forms as soon as each becomes available. With the electronic reporting system that the Commission activates today, EAS Participants will be able to provide useful data to the Commission more quickly than they can under the manual system. Further, by allowing EAS Participants to input the required data electronically over an extended period of time, the electronic filing system will impose a lesser burden on EAS Participants, who may use the electronic reporting system in lieu of the manual system required in the EAS Third Report and Order. The Nationwide EAS Test Reporting System is available at <http://fcc.gov/nationwideeastest>.

The FCC also announces the release of a Nationwide EAS Test Handbook (*Handbook*) which can be accessed on the agency's website at www.fcc.gov/nationwideeastest. The *Handbook* provides EAS Participants with operational instructions for the test, specifically:

- Relevant background on the EAS
- Technical information on the Nationwide EAS Test
- Information about technical resources available to support participation in the test

⁴ See 47 CFR § 11.61 (a)(3)(iv). The Nationwide EAS Test Reporting System has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget under the Paperwork Reduction Act and assigned control number 3060-0207 (Oct. 14, 2011).

- Step-by-step Nationwide EAS Test activation procedures
- Summary of Nationwide EAS Test result reporting requirements

A copy of the *Handbook* must be located at normal duty positions or EAS equipment locations when an operator is required to be on duty and be immediately available to staff responsible for administering the Nationwide EAS Test. The *Handbook* will supersede all other EAS Handbooks for the duration of the November 9, 2011 Nationwide EAS Test.⁵ A copy of the *Handbook* is attached as Appendix A. Copies of the *Handbook* can also be downloaded from the Bureau's web site at <http://www.fcc.gov/nationwideeastest>.

Finally, the FCC has made available on its website public service announcements in both English and Spanish regarding the Nationwide EAS Test.⁶ The PSAs may be accessed at www.fcc.gov/nationwideeastest, under EAS Participant Resources. We encourage EAS Participants to air announcements to educate consumers about the November 9 Nationwide EAS Test.

The Bureau will continue to provide additional information about this first Nationwide EAS Test through the release of further public notices. Please also visit the Bureau's web page (<http://www.fcc.gov/nationwideeastest>), where we will post announcements of significant developments affecting the Nationwide EAS Test for both EAS Participants and the general public. Updated information on this test, including recommended "best practices," can also be found on FEMA's "Emergency Alert System (EAS) Community Information Updates and Test Preparations" web page (http://www.fema.gov/emergency/ipaws/eas_info.shtm).

For further information regarding this test, contact Tom Beers, Chief, Policy Division, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, (202) 418-0952; or Gregory Cooke, Associate Chief, Policy Division, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau, (202) 418-2351.

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⁵ See 47 CFR §11.15.

⁶ Each video PSA has some form of captioning, either open or closed.