



PUBLIC NOTICE

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DA-26-82

Released: January 23, 2026

THE FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION ENCOURAGES DEBRIS REMOVAL AND UTILITY REPAIR TEAMS TO AVOID DAMAGING COMMUNICATIONS INFRASTRUCTURE IN AREAS IMPACTED BY WINTER STORM FERN

The Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau (PSHSB) encourages all entities involved with debris clearing operations and utility repairs related to the effects of Winter Storm Fern to take all steps necessary to avoid damaging critical communications facilities and infrastructure.

Winter Storm Fern may cause widespread damage and significant impacts to communications services and infrastructure. Winter storms and other natural disasters present numerous challenges for those working to restore essential phone and Internet services. For example, debris clearing operations to remove trees, replace damaged utility poles, and open roadways often result in significant, non-disaster related damage to critical communications infrastructure. Such damage can disrupt communications that support the safety and life and property, including 911 calls and first responder communications.

PSHSB encourages those entities working to clear debris, repair utility lines, and restore services to ensure their activities do not damage critical communications. Crews clearing debris should exercise caution to not cut or damage telephone or television cables that may be entangled in the debris. Similarly, entities conducting debris and restoration efforts that require digging (including trenching) are reminded to coordinate with appropriate authorities to ensure buried utilities can be located to avoid damage. Teams on the ground should take proactive steps to preserve and maintain critical communications and take immediate action, if necessary, to mitigate the effects of any damage that may occur to facilities or infrastructure.

For assistance, please contact the FCC Operations Center at 202-418-1122 or by e-mail at FCCOPS@fcc.gov.