



NEWS

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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. Circ 1974).

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FEMA, FCC CONTINUE TO WORK WITH STAKEHOLDERS TO HELP EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT NATIONWIDE TEST OF EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM

First-ever nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System to occur on November 9th at 2:00 pm eastern

WASHINGTON – With the first-ever nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System less than one week away, the leaders of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) sent an open letter to all stakeholders today, including governors, federal legislators, broadcasters, news networks and other organizations, asking for their continued help in educating their respective communities about the test.

Although the Emergency Alert System is decades old and often tested and used at the local level, it has never before been tested on a nationwide scale. This first-ever test will occur at 2:00 pm eastern on Wednesday, November 9, 2011. The test will occur simultaneously across the U.S. and its territories and will last approximately 30 seconds, after which regular programming will resume. The test will look and sound very similar to the local tests of the Emergency Alert System that occur frequently.

“The various disasters our country has faced this year underscore the need for effective and well-tested emergency alert and warning systems that could be used in a time of real emergency, at a moment’s notice,” FEMA Administrator Craig Fugate and FCC Chairman Julius Genachowski wrote in their letter to stakeholders. “The purpose of the test is to allow FEMA and the FCC to assess how well the Emergency Alert System would perform its primary function: alerting the public about a national emergency.”

As Fugate and Genachowski explain in their letter, testing this existing technology will help identify any positive changes that could be made as FEMA, the FCC and other partners continue working to build a modernized and fully accessible Emergency Alert System.

In preparing for this test, FEMA and the FCC have been working closely with the broadcast and disability communities, as well as state, territorial, tribal and local partners, and many other stakeholders to help broadcasters to make this test as accessible as possible.

As the test approaches, Fugate and Genachowski are spearheading an aggressive public education campaign to ensure that all Americans are aware of the test and know what to expect. As part of these efforts, they are asking stakeholders to make sure their communities are aware of key facts about the test, including that the test will appear on all broadcast radio and television stations, cable television systems, satellite radio and television systems, and wireline video service systems. The test will not impact landline or mobile phones, power grids, or Internet connectivity.

“As with all of our work, we know that the support of our state, local, tribal and territorial partners, along with the private sector, our faith-based and disability communities, and other key stakeholders, will be vital to effectively raising the public’s awareness of the test and minimizing undue public concern,” Fugate and

Genachowski continue in their letter. “We greatly appreciate your continued partnership as we prepare for this unique event and important public service.”

The full text of their letter can be found at: www.fema.gov/eastest. For more information on the test, [visit the FCC’s website](#) or [FEMA’s blog](#).

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