

**Media Contact:**

Will Wiquist, (202) 418-0509  
will.wiquist@fcc.gov

**For Immediate Release**

**FCC PROPOSES \$272,000 FINE AGAINST CBS FOR EMERGENCY ALERT TONE AIRED DURING EPISODE OF ‘YOUNG SHELDON’**

***Emergency Alert System Tones Must Only Be Used for Real Emergencies & Authorized Testing***

WASHINGTON, September 9, 2019—The Federal Communications Commission today proposed a \$272,000 fine against CBS Broadcasting for allegedly broadcasting a simulated Emergency Alert System (EAS) tone during a nationally televised episode of the sitcom “Young Sheldon.”

As the FCC’s Enforcement Bureau made clear in an [Enforcement Advisory](#) last month, broadcasting actual or simulated alert tones during non-emergencies and outside of proper testing or authorized public service announcements is a violation of the Commission’s rules and a serious public safety concern. The FCC recently reached settlements with ABC, AMC, Discovery, and Meruelo Radio regarding the unlawful broadcast of actual or simulated alert tones.

On April 12, 2018, CBS transmitted an episode of “Young Sheldon” via at least 227 television stations, including 15 of CBS’s owned-and-operated television stations. The episode included a sound effect accompanying a tornado warning, which the producers modified, but still audibly resembled actual EAS tones.

FCC rules prohibit broadcasting of EAS tones – including simulations of them – aside from actual emergencies or authorized tests or public service announcements. These rules aim to protect the integrity of the alert system by helping to avoid confusion in the event of a public threat or emergency, alert fatigue among listeners, and false activation of the EAS by the operative data elements contained in the alert tones.

As explained in the item, the FCC found that CBS’s modifications to the EAS tones did not make broadcasting such tones permissible because the audio elements used in the episode were substantially similar to the actual EAS tones.

The proposed action, formally called a Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture, or NAL, contains only allegations that advise a party on how it has apparently violated the law, and may set forth a proposed monetary penalty. The FCC may not impose a greater monetary penalty in this case than the amount proposed in the NAL. Neither the allegations nor the proposed sanctions in the NAL are final FCC actions. CBS will be given an opportunity to respond and the FCC will consider their submission of evidence and legal arguments before acting further to resolve the matter.

A copy of today's Notice of Apparent Liability is available at:  
<https://docs.fcc.gov/public/attachments/FCC-19-88A1.pdf>

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**Media Relations: (202) 418-0500 / ASL: (844) 432-2275 / TTY: (888) 835-5322 / Twitter: @FCC / [www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov)**

*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).*