

## ANNEX C - NOTIFICATION AND WARNING (ESF #15)

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this annex is to describe the process for notification of public officials and responders during EOC activation, and that accurate, coordinated, and timely information to the public, government, and the media is provided during disasters and large-scale emergencies. This includes warning and notification prior to an incident, post-incident updates, and distribution of crisis information during response and recovery.

### II. MISSION AREAS AND LIFELINES

#### A. Mission Areas

##### 1. Prevention

- a. Shelby County will identify critical objectives during the planning process that will prevent the impact of disasters from causing destruction and loss of life through timely and accurate warnings to the public so residents can take shelter or move away from the impact zone.
- b. Shelby County will provide awareness and protective action information to the public, and will issue timely and accurate warnings when a terrorist incident is imminent so the public can protect themselves from impact.

##### 2. Protection

- a. Shelby County will develop a complete and actionable sequence and scope of activities to be executed during an incident using available resources for protection of the public.
- b. Shelby County will use effective and accessible warning systems to communicate hazards to involved operators, security officials and the public

##### 3. Mitigation

- a. Shelby County will include notification and warning equipment and training in discussions about hazard mitigation planning as a means to reduce the impact of any incident

##### 4. Response

- a. Shelby County will provide a complete and integrated sequence and scope of tasks to achieve warning and notification in the community and will be able to implement these goals within a reasonable timeframe.
- b. Shelby County will inform all potentially affected segments of the population of critical lifesaving and life sustaining information by all means necessary to expedite the delivery of emergency services and aid to the public.
- c. Shelby County will deliver credible and actional messages to emergency services and the public to inform them of protective measures necessary to facilitate the transition to recovery after the incident.

##### 5. Recovery

- a. Shelby County will plan to provide and deliver appropriate and necessary information to the public and the community regarding actionable recovery activities and available resources to support affected populations.

#### B. Lifelines

1. Safety and Security
  - a. Shelby County will provide information to the public about protective actions through the emergency alert system options when evacuation and shelter-in-place orders have been issued.
  - b. Residents and others may be directed to other sources of information for details related to protective actions.
2. Communications
  - a. Shelby County will provide alerts, warnings and critical messages to the general public regarding emergency incidents and imminent hazards. They will use local alert and warning systems, and may use IPAWS through established systems and channels.
  - b. Shelby County will maintain communication with 911 answer points and other dispatch centers during times of approaching storms and other imminent hazards to ensure that the public receives accurate, timely, and complete warnings and notifications.

### III. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

#### A. Situation

1. Emergencies and disasters that pose a danger to the public require warnings and incident updates to be shared with the public and affected communities.
2. These incidents also require internal notifications within the emergency response agencies and jurisdictions so that a safe response can be implemented.
  - a. Warning sirens are not capable of disseminating a specific message but can instead indicate to those in proximity to use another means to obtain more information about the situation.
3. Warnings and notifications will be disseminated to the public via traditional media, social media, emergency mass notification systems, other emergency alert systems used by the county or individual jurisdictions for emergencies including mobile public address systems and door to door notifications.
4. Any means of communication necessary will be used to notify public officials, EOC staff, and emergency personnel. This could include telephone, emergency notification system, radio, cellular phone, papers, or sending someone to provide face-to-face notification.
5. Redundant notification methods are critical to ensure the quick and efficient notification of as many people as possible.
6. Shelby County has sixteen outdoor warning sirens throughout the county. Each siren is owned, operated, and maintained by the jurisdiction in which it is located.
  - a. Activation procedures for these sirens are based upon local and county dispatch procedures.
  - b. The purpose of the outdoor warning sirens is to notify people who are outside to seek shelter and additional information about the situation.
  - c. Outdoor warning sirens are used for tornado warnings.
  - d. The Shelby County Resource Manual has a listing of sirens, backup power status, and means of activation.
7. Many public buildings such as schools, nursing homes, institutions, and places of public assembly use weather radios. The EMA encourages the use of weather radios through its public education efforts.

8. The Shelby County emergency notification system is a web and phone-based system that can be used to notify the entire county of an emergency message via phone, text or email, or can be targeted to just an area at risk. TXXT/TTD services is available for the hearing impaired.
9. Shelby County is certified to use IPAWS, the national alert and warning infrastructure, to notify people via mobile phone within reach of a local cell tower about an impending emergency regardless of sign-up or residency.

**B. Assumptions**

1. Not all warning methods will reach all individuals to include those with functional and access needs, therefore, multiple methods should be employed to reach the greatest number of individuals with any critical information.
2. Some people who are directly threatened by a hazard may ignore, not hear, or misunderstand the warnings, and some do not choose to participate in warning programs.
3. Outdoor warning sirens will be audible primarily to those who are out-of-doors and within approximately a one-mile radius of the warning device.
4. Weather conditions such as storm noise and wind diminish the effectiveness of sound transmission by the outdoor warning sirens. Sirens may also be inoperable or fail due to mechanical issues.
5. Limitations in wireless service areas, landline, and internet service interruptions, and other potential communication system failures can make the delivery of emergency warnings difficult or impossible.
6. Social media warnings can be shared very quickly; therefore, all posted messages should include the date, time and location of warnings to ensure accuracy as the information shared.
7. While print media is not generally effective for warnings, newspapers and radio stations can post warnings on their websites and social media pages, providing more immediate public access.
8. Weather radios transmit consistent information from the official National Weather Service (NSW) personnel and are accurate and timely notification systems.
9. Not all residents or visitors to Shelby County will sign up for Hyper-reach alerts even though ongoing information campaigns ask that they do so.

**IV. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS**

**A. Core Capabilities**

1. Planning
  - a. The Shelby County EMA will work with first responders and other community partners on a regular basis to consider the continued integration of warning and notification considerations into emergency plans of all sorts. They will maintain an effective system of notifying responders and government officials, as well as the general public, of imminent or approaching threats and hazards, including protective actions to prevent losses.
2. Public Information and Warning
  - a. Shelby County will establish and maintain a communications corridor with the State of Ohio Emergency Management Agency, and other state and local agencies to successfully assure the issuance of warnings to everyone.

- b. Shelby County will continually evaluate the technology and equipment used to deliver warnings, notifications of threats, and risk information and will update as necessary to keep pace with current means and methods of warning.
  - c. Shelby County will assure populations with special needs (non-English speaking, no access to Internet or cellular signals, no access to social media, special groups such as medically challenged, sensory impaired, or culturally unique, etc.) are able to receive warnings and notifications in an effective way that provides the option to take protective action.
3. Operational Communications
- a. Shelby County will assure first responders and residents that a clear and functioning line of communication between the two groups will be maintained during incidents.
- B. National Warning Systems:
- 1. The National Warning System (NAWAS) is a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) based 24-hour continuous private line telephone system used to convey warnings to federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial government and public safety officials.
  - 2. The Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS), the nation's internet-based alert and warning infrastructure, includes the following components:
    - a. The National Weather Service (NWS) of the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is the government agency responsible for the declaration and dissemination of "Severe Weather Watches and Warnings."
    - b. All-Hazards NOAA Weather Radio stations provide continuous around-the-clock broadcasts of the latest weather information directly from Weather Service Offices.
    - c. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) is the message dissemination pathway that sends warnings via broadcast, cable, satellite, and wireline services designed to provide an operational public warning capability to national, state and local governments. Local broadcast media voluntarily suspend regular broadcasts and disseminate emergency messages to the public.
    - d. Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) - The message dissemination pathway that broadcasts alerts and warnings to cell phones and other mobile devices.
- C. State of Ohio Warning Systems:
- 1. NAWAS - The Director of the Ohio Department of Public Safety is responsible for operating the state-level portion of NAWAS.
  - 2. IPAWS – The Ohio Emergency Management Agency is responsible for operating the state level portion of IPAWS.
  - 3. The Ohio Primary Warning Point is located at the Ohio State Highway Patrol Headquarters in Columbus, Ohio.
    - a. The State alternate Warning Point is in the State Emergency Operations Center.
    - b. The Law Enforcement Automated Data System - The Ohio LEADS System provides for rapid dissemination of emergency warnings to all Ohio law enforcement agencies with LEADS terminal equipment.

D. Local Warning Systems:

1. NAWAS - The Shelby County Warning Point is at the Ohio State Patrol, Piqua Post, which will advise the Sheriff's Office.
2. EAS - Shelby County's Emergency Alert System (EAS) equipment is in the dispatch center at the Sheriff's Office.
  - a. The following are the local EAS stations that provide continuous public information about emergencies.
  - b. WMVR-FM 105.5 FM
  - c. WHKO-FM K99.1 FM
  - d. **ADD SIREN STUFF HERE** – CHERI will send it to me, or look in the original files
3. IPAWS – IPAWS provides public safety officials with an effective way to alert and warn the public about serious emergencies using the Emergency Alert System (EAS), Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio. Shelby County is certified to use the IPAWS to alert and warn the public of local large emergencies or disasters through the county emergency notification system.
4. All-Hazards NOAA Weather Radio – These radios are used to disseminate warnings for severe weather events or potential events, amber alerts, hazardous materials releases, or other disasters.
5. The Shelby County Sheriff may declare the following Snow Alerts in Shelby County.
  - a. Level One: Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Roads are also icy. Drive very cautiously
  - b. Level Two: Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Only those who feel it is necessary to drive should be out on the roadways. Contact your employer to see if you should report to work.
  - c. Level Three: All roads are closed to non-emergency personnel. No one should be out during these conditions unless it is absolutely necessary to travel. All employees should contact their employer to see if they should report to work. Those traveling on the roadway may be subject to arrest.
6. The Shelby County Sheriff or Shelby County Engineer may close local roads due to road conditions or necessary emergency repairs, and they will take all necessary steps to communicate this information effectively to the public.
7. Radios and pagers – Emergency services radios and pagers are used for notification and warning of emergencies to all response agencies, w/voice for tornado warnings.
8. Local media outlets cooperate by supporting dissemination of emergency information.

**V. ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

A. Organization

1. Receipt of Warning
  - a. The Shelby County Sheriff's Office is the official 24-hour warning point for Shelby County. The dispatch center will receive warnings regarding severe weather, technological hazards, dam failures, widespread fires, hazardous materials incidents, and other emergencies affecting the county.
  - b. The Sheriff's Office will receive these warnings by telephone, fax, radio, National Warning System (NAWAS), IPAWS (Integrated Public Alert and Warning System), Law

Enforcement Automated Data System (LEADS), Emergency Alert System (EAS), All-Hazards NOAA Weather Radio, eyewitness reports, or media contact.

- 1) The Ohio State Patrol (OSP) is the State of Ohio Warning Point and operates the Ohio portion of the NAWAS.
  - 2) Upon receipt of a NAWAS warning, the OSP Post in Piqua will notify the Shelby County Sheriff Dispatch. In addition to this notification, all warnings will be sent over the LEADS to law enforcement agencies in the warning area.
  - 3) The LEADS is a teletype system that connects law enforcement agencies in Ohio. It allows text messaging and access to various law enforcement databases. Messages can be sent to a single location, a quadrant, or all terminals in Ohio.
  - 4) The emergency notification system Hyper-Reach provides for public warning using landlines, cell phones, email, and text messages. It can be used to announce tornado watches and warnings, amber alerts, missing persons, and other natural or man-made disasters.
    - a) The emergency notification system can be activated by from the either of the county's dispatch centers.
  - 5) All-Hazards NOAA Weather Radio is used to disseminate warnings for severe weather events or potential events, amber alerts, hazardous materials releases, or other disasters.
    - a) The system is activated by the National Weather Service (NWS) upon determination that a watch or warning should be issued, or when an appropriate request is received from a local jurisdiction.
    - b) The NWS Office serving Shelby County is in Wilmington, Ohio.
2. Dissemination of Warning
- a. Personnel in the Sheriff's Office dispatch center will warn emergency responders and the general public as quickly as possible and by whatever means are most expedient.
    - 1) This could include the use of any or all of the following: emergency pagers, radios, telephone, cellular phone, EAS, All-Hazards NOAA Weather Radio, local media support, activation of local outdoor warning sirens.
  - b. Government officials, with the possible exception of the EMA Director, will not be contacted directly unless a warning develops into an emergency or disaster.
  - c. Warning and notification of hearing impaired or non-English speaking populations.

## B. Assignment of Responsibilities

1. Law Enforcement Dispatch Center
  - a. Activate radio-controlled warning sirens, by prearranged agreement
  - b. Initiate notification of first responders
  - c. Coordinate with the Shelby County EMA Director for special warning and notification requirements in emergencies.
2. Shelby County Emergency Management Agency
  - a. Disseminate the initial notification to EOC personnel based upon an Emergency Call-Down List in the Emergency Operations Center Standard Operating Guideline (EOC SOG).

- b. Work with the Public Information Officer (PIO) to distribute necessary warning information to the public.
  - c. Contact local media and foreign translators for preparation of special warning messages.
3. Law Enforcement
- a. Provide mobile public address systems and door-to-door notification as need to warn the public.
  - b. Police departments having control over sirens will activate those warning systems, upon notification of the emergency.
4. Fire Departments
- a. Provide mobile public address systems and door-to-door notification as needed to warn the public.
  - b. Fire departments with sirens will activate those warning systems, upon notification of the emergency and based upon local protocol.
5. Other Agencies & Departments
- a. Develop and maintain internal notification call-down lists.

## **VI. DIRECTION AND CONTROL**

### **A. Notification of Emergency Response Personnel & Government Officials -**

Notifications to all involved agencies will go out through the emergency notification system.

When an incident occurs requiring more than the standard jurisdictional response, notification of emergency response personnel and government officials must progress in a timely and organized fashion. The following list provides a guideline for how the process should proceed if the emergency notification system is not available or functioning, although not every agency listed will need to become involved in every incident.

1. Law Enforcement Dispatch Centers notify:
  - a. All concerned/involved law enforcement agencies
  - b. All concerned/involved fire/EMS departments
  - c. The Shelby County Emergency Management Agency (initial or confirmation)
  - d. County Commissioners (initial or confirmation)
  - e. The County Coroner
2. The Emergency Management Agency notifies:
  - a. Commissioners, Mayors, Township Trustees (initial notification)
  - b. EMA Employees
  - c. Shelby County Communications Officer
    - 1) The Shelby County Communications Officer notifies members of the EMA Communications Team, SCARES/RACES volunteers and other amateur radio operators as needed.
  - d. Miami Valley Chapter of the American Red Cross
  - e. Ohio EMA
  - f. The County Sheriff's Office (if the sheriff's office has not made contact with the EMA)
  - g. The County Engineer's Office (initial or confirmation)

- h. Sidney Shelby County Health Department
- i. Shelby County Public Information Officer (PIO)
  - 1) PIO notifies:
    - a) Radio/TV stations
    - b) Newspapers
  - j. The Ohio Department of Transportation, Shelby County Garage
  - k. Neighboring counties that may be affected
  - l. Other agencies and offices as required for support
- 3. Shelby County Commissioners notify:
  - a. The County Auditor
  - b. The County Prosecutor
  - c. The County Job & Family Services Director
  - d. Educational Services Center
- 4. Mayors notify:
  - a. Council Members
  - b. Public Works and Engineering Departments, as applicable
  - c. City/Village School Authorities, as applicable
- 5. Local Law Enforcement notifies:
  - a. Mayor, other key local officials, as applicable (initial or confirmation)
  - b. Fire Department/s (initial or confirmation)
  - c. Other Law Enforcement agencies, state or local, as applicable (initial or confirmation)
  - d. Internal staff (per established 24-hour recall procedure)
- 6. Fire Departments notify:
  - a. Service/Safety Director, as applicable (notification or confirmation)
  - b. Local law enforcement agencies, as applicable (initial or confirmation)
  - c. EMS, as applicable
  - d. Internal staff (per established 24-hour recall procedures)
  - e. Mayor or other key officials, as applicable (initial or confirmation)
- 7. Municipal Engineers notify:
  - a. Mayor (initial or confirmation)
  - b. Service/Safety Director (initial or confirmation)
  - c. Public Safety Dispatch (initial or confirmation)
  - d. Internal Staff (per established 24-hour recall procedures)

## **VII. CONTINUITY OF GOVERNMENT**

- A. The lines of succession for those charged with notification and warning duties will be maintained within their departmental SOGs.

- B. Refer to Appendix 3, Procedures for the Relocation & Safeguarding of Vital Records in the Basic Plan and Appendix 1, Procedures for the Protection of Government Resources, Facilities, and Personnel in Annex N, Resource Management.

## **VIII. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS**

- A. Equipment
  - 1. Most of the equipment for dissemination of warnings in Shelby County is housed and operated by the Shelby County Sheriff's Dispatch Center and the Sidney Police Department Dispatch Center.
  - 2. Many private individuals and businesses have equipment in place to receive emergency warnings.
  - 3. The Shelby County Resource Manual maintains a siren location chart for siren locations within the county.
- B. Warning System Tests
  - 1. The county siren system is tested on the 1<sup>st</sup> Monday of month. Sirens are individually tested depending upon local protocol. Many entities participate in Ohio's annual tornado drill as a test of their sirens.
  - 2. The National Weather Service conducts a routine weekly test (RWT) of the All-Hazards NOAA Weather Radio each week on Wednesday between 11 AM and 12 Noon, unless there is the threat of severe weather. Severe weather will be defined as severe thunderstorm, tornado, flash flood or blizzard watches or warnings.

## **IX. PLAN DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE**

- A. The Shelby County Sheriff and EMA Director are responsible for reviewing this annex and updating it as necessary.
- B. The EMA Director is responsible for preparing and distributing updates to the county EOP.
- C. All agencies and departments with warning duties are responsible for developing and maintaining departmental SOGs, mutual-aid agreements, personnel rosters including 24-hour emergency notification telephone numbers and equipment inventories.

## **X. AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES**

- A. Authorities
  - 1. Ohio Attorney General Opinion 86-023, Snow Emergency Powers
- B. References
  - 1. State of Ohio Emergency Alert System Plan, 9/2003.
  - 2. NAWAS web site: <http://www.fas.org/nuke/guide/usa/c3i/nawas>

**XI. ADDENDA**

Appendix 1 – NWS Watch/Warning Matrix

Appendix 2 - Flood Warning System

Tab 1 - Siren Location Chart

**XII. AUTHENTICATION**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Shelby County Sheriff

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Shelby County EMA Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



