Wireless Emergency Alerts Will Warn of Imminent Threats Without Subscription

Galain Solutions released a white paper that navigates the new Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) system, which will be operational beginning this spring.

Wireless Emergency Alerts are emergency messages sent by government agencies through mobile carriers. Government partners include local and state public safety agencies, FEMA, the FCC and the National Weather Service. The official name of the program is the Commercial Mobile Alert System (CMAS) per federal regulation, but the name WEA has been adopted by the wireless carriers for public interfacing.

Nearly six years in development by FEMA, the FCC and wireless carriers, the system enables authorities to send Wireless Emergency Alerts to cell phone users anywhere, anytime. The new technology will be used to relay warnings of imminent threats to mobile phones using cell broadcast technology.

“This program represents a fundamental shift in how the public is alerted to emergencies,” said Rick Wimberly, president of Galain Solutions. “Not since the Emergency Broadcast System in the 1960s has there been such a broadly implemented alerting initiative.”

How It Works

Emergency alerts will automatically appear on a user’s mobile device screen without interrupting a call in progress. Wireless customers do not have to sign-up to receive the alerts, and they will not be charged for the incoming messages.

“With this technology the National Weather Service, for example, will be able to send an alert to cell phones in a specific area under threat of a tornado,” said Lorin Bristow, managing partner at Galain Solutions. “Or when a child is abducted, local law enforcement can send a message to a targeted geography, which will put countless eyes on the lookout in a matter of minutes.”

He added: “The ability for emergency managers to communicate with the public has taken a quantum leap. It has the potential to save countless lives and help people avoid imminent danger to their families and property.”

To download the white paper click here [1].

Also listen to Galain’s “Understanding CMAS in Ten Minutes (or less)” podcast at http://youtu.be/OVhX_SbVxnY [2].

More information on best practices for emergency notification programs is available at http://www.emergencymgmt.com/emergency-blogs/alerts [3].

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