



# OREGON OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

## Nationwide Test of the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) Fact Sheet

**WHAT:** A national test of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) with radio, TV, cable stations and wireless carriers. IPAWS is a national system for local alerting that provides authenticated emergency alert and information messaging from emergency officials to the public through radio, TV, cell phones and Internet applications. This is the fourth EAS nationwide test since 2011 and the first national WEA test.

**WHY:** To be sure that in times of an emergency or disaster, public safety officials have methods and systems that will deliver urgent alerts and warnings to the public.

Periodic testing of public alert and warning systems is a way to assess the operational readiness of the infrastructure for distribution of a national message and determine whether technological improvements are needed.

The WEA system became operational in April 2012, and there has never been a nationwide WEA message sent. A nationwide WEA message would only be used in the most extreme emergency situation.

**WHERE:** Nationwide

**WHEN:** September 20, 2018

- **The WEA test commences at 11:18 AM Pacific Time (2:18 PM EDT); the EAS portion follows at 11:20 AM Pacific Time (2:20 PM EDT).**
- The EAS test is expected to last approximately one minute and will verify the delivery and broadcast of a national test message and assess the operational readiness of the infrastructure for distribution of a national message and determine whether technological improvements are needed.

**WHO:** FEMA in coordination with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

**HOW:** The WEA test message will be sent to all wireless providers that currently participate in IPAWS. Cell towers will broadcast the WEA test for approximately 30 minutes. During this time, cell phones that are 1.) switched on, 2.) within range of an active cell tower, and 3.) whose wireless carrier participates in WEAs, should be capable of receiving the test message. Cell phones should receive the WEA message once.

The EAS test message will be made available and shared through radio, TV, cable, and direct broadcast satellite systems in all U.S. states and territories. Their participation in the test is mandatory per FCC rules. The WEA test message will be sent to all wireless providers that currently participate in IPAWS.