

EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM (EAS)

PROCEDURES FOR TEXAS EAS BEAUMONT REGION

INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING COUNTIES

Jefferson
Jasper
Orange
Hardin
Newton

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. This plan was prepared by the Beaumont EAS Region Committee. It is used to disseminate emergency information and warning to the general public in the Beaumont EAS Region or any portion thereof within the broadcast coverage and cable system service areas at the request of designated local, state, and federal officials. This Beaumont EAS Region plan may be activated on a day-to-day basis in response to emergencies such as: power outages, tornadoes, floods, civil disorders, industrial plant accidents, toxic leaks ore any occurrence which poses a danger to life or property.
- B. Acceptance of, or participation in this plan shall not be deemed as a relinquishment of program control, and shall not be deemed exercising independent discretion and responsibility in any given situation. Broadcast stations and cable systems originating emergency communications shall be deemed to have conferred re-broadcast authority. The concept of management of each broadcast station and cable system for information and instructions to the general public is provided by the FCC Rules and the Texas State Emergency Alert System Plan.

II. AUTHORITY

- A. Title 47 U.S.C. 151, 154 (i) & (o), 303 (0), 524 (g) & 606; and 47 C.F.R. Part 11, FCC Rules and Regulations, EAS.
- C. Texas EAS Plan, November 15, 1996.

III. KEY EAS SOURCES

- A. National Weather Service
Monitoring Source: NOAA weather radio 162.475
Location: Lake Charles, LA
Contact: Roger Erickson (or ANY)
UNLISTED HOTLINE: published elsewhere
FAX: 318-474-8705
Hours of Operation: 24 Hours
- B. Local Primary Source One: KLVI-AM
Radio Frequency: 560 AM
Location: Beaumont, TX
EAS Monitoring Assignments: KTRH, NOAA
Contact: Jim Love (ANY)
Telephone: 409-896-5555
UNLISTED HOTLINE: published elsewhere
FAX: 409-896-5599
Hours of Operation: 24 hours
- C. Local Primary Source Two: KQXY
Radio Frequency: 94.1 FM
Location: Beaumont, TX
EAS Monitoring Assignments: KTRH, NOAA
Contact: (ANY)
Telephone: 409-833-9421
UNLISTED HOTLINE: published elsewhere
FAX: 409-833-9296
Hours of Operation: 24 hours

IV. AUTHENTICATION

- A. Code Words – Code words will be designated by the Local EAS Committee Chair. They will be changed at the discretion of the Chair every six months or at the conclusion of any major disaster.
- B. Return Phone Calls – The National Weather Service or Local Primary Stations received a call directly from a designated official for EAS activation, may return the phone call to the appropriate number for verification. The phone numbers of all designated officials follows in Annex A.
- C. NWS (National Weather Service) warnings received via NOAA Weather Radio do not need verification.

V. IMPLEMENTATION

A. Procedures for Designated Officials/National Weather Service, KLVI, KQXY

1. Request activation of EAS through the emergency management coordinator or assistant in your area (see ANNEX A). They will contact the National Weather Service Office in Lake Charles, Louisiana by phone. Then, if at all possible, fax the details of the alert. Only officials in Annex A are authorized to request activation of EAS.

(If it is impossible to get through to the National Weather Service, request activation through KLVI. If it is not possible to contact the National Weather Service or KLVI, contact KQXY.)

NOTE: When “severe weather” warnings are issued by the National Weather Service, many broadcasters are monitoring the National Weather Service. Do not request EAS activation for severe weather warnings through KLVI unless your community is under imminent threat and the National Weather Service has not broadcast the warning. Requests for weather warning EAS activation by local officials should be made directly to the National Weather Service Lake Charles Office.

Broadcasters and cable operators are expecting the EAS to be used only for life-threatening emergencies. Keep in mind two things

- a. Some broadcasters and cable operators will have their EAS Decoders set to the Automatic Mode. There is no one there to screen your message and decide if it applies to their community or if it is an accidental test. The first time you activate the system for a frivolous event, you will lose the confidence of your area broadcasters, cable operators, and the National Weather Service.
- b. Broadcasters and cable operators decide to participate in the local-level EAS on a voluntary basis. No one can force them to carry your EAS alerts.

B. Procedures for the National Weather Service, KLVI, and KQXY

1. Authenticate the request for an EAS activation.
 - a. Open the Authentication Code Word envelope.

- b. Ask the caller for the authenticating code word.
 - c. If they have answered the question correctly, take all information for the alert. You may receive a fax.
2. Enter the proper FIPS codes on the EAS box.
3. You may call back the official for final verification.
4. Run the activation.

C. Procedures for Broadcast and Cable Personnel

Each broadcast and cable organization will follow the federal, state and local rules as specified in each of those plans. The exact procedure for each entity will vary with their individual commitments and abilities. The following guideline is established.

- a. Upon receipt of an EAS activation, the operator will check the text and/or recorded audio of the alert to verify its broadcast quality
- b. The operator will ensure the details of the message are given to the public. You may have a talent read the information on-air. Of course, the best way is to relay the event as is. This is recommended to ensure the timeliness and accuracy of the alert.

D. Procedures for the National Weather Service in Lake Charles

The National Weather Service will originate an alert for any authenticated request it receives. The National Weather Service is considered to be a clearing house for emergency messages. They will not interpret an emergency/non-emergency situation. It is for this reason that the guidelines for what an emergency is, has been specified in Section V.

E. Tests

The Required Monthly Test and Required Weekly Test are considered sufficient to test the equipment and the chain of communications throughout the broadcast systems. An organized test throughout the five county area is allowable at the discretion of the EAS Chairperson.

VII. NOTE ABOUT CABLE SYSTEMS

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT HAS GIVEN AN EXTENSION TO THE CABLE INDUSTRY TO INSTALL THEIR EAS EQUIPMENT. THE FINAL DATE FOR EAS IMPLEMENTATION, FOR CABLE, HAS BEEN PUSHED BACK TO DECEMBER 1998. THIS TIME WAS NECESSARY TO ANSWER CERTAIN TECHNICAL PROBLEMS INHERENT IN MULTI-CHANNEL MEDIA.

WHEN THE CABLE GROUPS HAVE THEIR EAS SYSTEMS IN PLACE, THEY WILL BLANK ALL CHANNELS AND INSERT THE EAS ALERT OVER A BLANK SCREEN. THE CABLE GROUPS WILL NOT PUT THE EAS SIGNAL OVER ANY LOCAL TELEVISION STATION WHICH HAS ITS OWN NEWS AND/OR WEATHER PERSONNEL.

VIII. ANNEXES

(For security purposes Annexes are not published here but are available from John Cascio, Jefferson County Emergency Management, (409) 722-4371.

ANNEX A: List of designated officials and phone numbers

ANNEX B: EAS Committee List

ANNEX C: List of Radio, Cable and TV addresses

ANNEX D: Signature Page