



Texas AMBER, Blue, Silver & Endangered Missing Persons Alert Programs

(FAQ) AMBER Alert Notifications - Cell Phones, Television and Radio

Cell Phones – Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)

- What is the Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) system?
 - The WEA system is an initiative of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Federal Communications Commission (FCC), The Wireless Foundation (CTIA) and the wireless industry to notify the public of dangerous situations. According to the CTIA, the WEA system provides mobile consumers with notifications regarding:
 - Presidential Alerts – Issued by the President or a designee.
 - Imminent Threat Alerts – Severe man-made or natural disasters, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, etc., where an imminent threat to life or property exists; and
 - AMBER Alerts – Child abduction incidents which satisfy the U.S. Department of Justice’s (DOJ) criteria to help law enforcement search for and locate an abducted child. DOJ criteria can be found at <http://www.amberalert.gov/guidelines.htm>

During an alert, WEA capable devices will receive a text-like message, vibration and an audible tone. WEA notifications involve technologies designed to avoid network congestion, with the ability to target specific geographical areas.

- Why am I receiving alerts on my wireless device, when I did not subscribe?
 - All WEA capable wireless devices are automatically “opted-in”.
- How do I disable alerts on my wireless device?
 - You may only disable Imminent Threat and AMBER Alert notifications. Contact your wireless provider for further instructions, which may vary by phone model and wireless carrier.

- Why did my wireless device not receive a WEA alert?
 - Only WEA capable wireless devices will receive an alert. Contact your wireless provider to determine if your phone model is “WEA capable”.

- Will I receive WEA notifications on my wireless device for Silver, Blue and Endangered Missing Persons alerts?
 - No. The WEA system only supports Presidential, Imminent Threat and AMBER alerts at this time.

- Is there a cost involved with receiving WEA messages, or will the notifications count against my wireless plan limitations?
 - No. There is no cost to receive WEA notifications. Text messaging limits within your wireless plan are not affected.

- Are WEA notifications considered text messages?
 - No. WEA notifications employ a new technology designed to avoid network congestion, however, appear on your wireless device similar to a text message.

- Who issues WEA-AMBER Alert notifications?
 - The National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC) issues WEA-AMBER Alerts on behalf of the state’s alert network and participating regional alert programs. Local jurisdictions with WEA issuing authority could possibly issue their own WEA-AMBER Alerts.

- During what hours are WEA-AMBER Alert notifications issued?
 - WEA-AMBER Alerts involving the state’s network are issued by the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), between the hours of 6:00 AM and 11:00 PM. Available regional and local alert networks determine their own WEA operational hours.

- How many times will I be notified of a single child abduction incident via the WEA system?
 - Only once, in order to prevent public desensitization. The public is encouraged to seek additional information via radio and television outlets, to include social media. The state network posts alert updates to their Twitter account at “Texas Alerts@TX_Alerts”.

- What type of child abduction information will be displayed within WEA-AMBER Alert notifications?
 - WEA messages are limited to 90-characters. A vehicle license plate with available vehicle descriptors is the preferred format.

- Who do I contact if I see the vehicle?
 - Immediately call “9-1-1”, or your local law enforcement agency.

Television & Radio – Emergency Alert System (EAS)

To include the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) All Hazards Weather Radio.

- What is the Emergency Alert (EAS) system?
 - The EAS serves as a national public warning system, requiring broadcasters, cable television systems, wireless cable systems, satellite digital audio radio services (SDARS) providers, and direct broadcast satellite (DBS) providers to allow the President to address the public during national emergencies. State and local authorities may also use the EAS to alert the public of specific emergency situations, to include severe weather and AMBER alerts.

- Why am I receiving alerts on my television/radio, when I did not subscribe?
 - Broadcasters and television stations are required by law to interrupt programming, in order to notify the public of specific emergency situations.

- How do I disable alerts on my television/radio?
 - This is not possible if your television or radio is activated and receiving network broadcasts.

- Will I receive EAS notifications on my television/radio for Silver, Blue and Endangered Missing Persons alerts?
 - No. The EAS system only supports AMBER alerts.

- Who issues EAS AMBER Alert notifications?
 - The National Weather Service (NWS) issues EAS AMBER Alert notifications on behalf of the state's network. Regional AMBER Alert networks in Texas could also form an agreement with the NWS, or a local primary radio station with the ability to activate the EAS system in their region.

- During what hours are EAS AMBER Alert notifications issued?
 - 24/7, to include holidays and weekends. Between the hours of 11:00 PM and 6:00 AM, EAS AMBER Alert notifications will not include an audible tone.

- How many times will I be notified of a single child abduction incident via the EAS system?
 - Only once, in order to prevent public desensitization. The public is encouraged to seek additional information via radio and television outlets, to include social media. The state network posts alert updates to their Twitter account at "Texas Alerts@TX_Alerts".

- Who do I contact if I see the vehicle, child or suspect?
 - Immediately call "9-1-1", or your local law enforcement agency.