



Waldo County Emergency Management Agency
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emadirector@waldocountyme.gov

February 11, 2019

Michael J. Wilhelm
Policy and Licensing Division
Public Safety & Homeland Security Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW Room 7-A846
Washington, DC 20554

SUBJ: FCC Rule Waiver Request for Waldo County, Maine Live Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) Test – PS Docket No. 15-91.

Dear Mr. Wilhelm,

The Waldo County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) is the Alerting Authority for the County of Waldo, Maine. As the Director of this Agency, I would like to request an FCC Rule Waiver for 47 CFR§ 10.520 on behalf of Participating Commercial Mobile Service (CMS) Providers in order to conduct a live WEA test within Waldo County, Maine. This Agency uses the CivicReady notification system to initiate WEA messages.

I propose to schedule the live WEA test on Friday, March 22, 2019 at 3:00 pm and to cover all of Waldo County, Maine (FIPS 23027). Should an event occur that would interrupt the ability to initiate the test, our backup date would be Friday, April 5, 2019 at 3:00 pm. The test will be conducted by the Waldo County EMA staff, as the Alerting Authority for the County. The live-code test will only involve a WEA only. The test message, which will contain 90 characters or less, will read "*This is a test of the Waldo County Wireless Emergency Alert System. No action is required.*"

This will be the first live test of the WEA system for the County of Waldo, Maine. The County EMA office is responsible for the Waldo County emergency public information and warning, which includes public alerts to our residents and visitors during major emergencies and disasters. Waldo County is subject to severe winter and summer storms that can impact life, safety and property.

The purpose of conducting the test is to ensure that emergency management staff are able to test and validate its IPAWS/WEA origination capabilities and the scope and area of coverage by the transmissions systems of the CMS providers. Waldo County believes that it is imperative to test the system now, rather than wait until May 2019 when the FCC's WEA end-to-end testing rules become effective.

Waldo County is susceptible to severe winter storms (blizzards, noreasters and ice storms), tropical storms (including hurricanes), wildfires, grid failures, and hazardous materials releases. Our use of WEA is critical to alert the public of approaching hazards, to provide emergency directions, and to inform what other information sources are available, such as websites, social media, and TV and radio.

The Waldo County EMA staff will implement a detailed public outreach and education campaign to inform the public about what the WEA alert system is; what the system is used for; what is expected of the public following an alert, the date and time of the scheduled live test (and backup date and time); and how the public can provide input following the test. The plan will contain multiple means and methods of publicizing, to include: press releases for local newspapers, television, and FM radio; posts on social media; and e-mails and posters sent to public safety departments, schools, and other public facilities. The County of Waldo has also coordinated information about the test with the Participating CMS providers that operate within the County of Waldo, as well as the emergency authorities that operate within Waldo County and surrounding jurisdictions, including first responder organizations such as police and fire departments and 911 public safety answering points (PSAP), to ensure that they are aware of the test and can confirm to the public that the WEA message is a test.

As part of our evaluation of the scope and area of coverage by the transmissions systems of the CMS providers, we will coordinate with our emergency management and response personnel located around the County, to provide feedback on their location when they received or did not receive the test message. We will also provide an opportunity for the public to provide comments and feedback by e-mail or social media, following the conclusion of the test.

We will annotate problems that occur with the WEA test and will provide feedback to the EMA staff and the CMS providers.

Thank you for your assistance. We look forward to hearing from you soon so we can move forward with our planning.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at 338-3870 or emadirector@waldocountyme.gov.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dale D. Rowley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

DALE D. ROWLEY, CEM, PE
Director, Waldo County EMA
COG ID: 201201

COG NAME: ME Waldo County Emergency Management Agency