



County of Sonoma
FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

FIRE SERVICES * EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT * HAZARDOUS MATERIALS



JIM COLANGELO, INTERIM DIRECTOR

July 26, 2018

Ms. Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

RE: Sonoma County Wireless Emergency Alert Test Date Change

Dear Secretary Dortch:

Due to FEMA's recent announcement of its National WEA and EAS test, Sonoma County hereby requests a change of our requested test date of Thursday, September 20, 2018 to Wednesday, September 12, 2018. As before, we request approval for an FCC Rule Waiver in order to conduct a live Emergency Alert System (EAS) and Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) test by the Sonoma County Fire and Emergency Services Department (FES). FES is the primary alert and warning authority for IPAWS in Sonoma County. Our proceeding 15-91 Confirmation Number is 20180720276758822.

The live test would be conducted on Wednesday, September 12, 2018. This test would target multiple areas within Sonoma County. This will be the first live test of the WEA system for Sonoma County. The purpose of conducting the test at this time is to ensure that emergency management officials in Sonoma County have a clear understanding of how alerts would perform in our varied topography.

Since our wildland fires last year, there has been a lack of faith in the emergency warning systems in Sonoma County. With updated policies and trainings, it is vital that we conduct a WEA test to inform our residents and build confidence.

Sonoma County wants our citizens to be familiar with the format of various alert and warning system formats. In the event of an emergency, WEA, EAS and other emergency messaging will direct citizens to our emergency information website (socopsa.org) for more information.

The text of the test will read: **TEST emergency message - Sonoma County. www.socopsa.org to provide feedback. No other action needed.**

FES has already begun to prepare a comprehensive communications plan and exercise plan. Staff have been in direct contact with jurisdictions who have successfully conducted WEA and EAS tests to include Washington DC. Sonoma County will draw upon the experiences of those jurisdictions and lessons learned to fully inform and prepare this test effort.

As a part of this test, a media campaign to target our constituents, as well as surrounding counties, will be implemented to ensure public understanding of the need and value for the scheduled WEA/EAS test. Sonoma County will also reach out to the public information officers of the affected

local jurisdictions to help with communication with local broadcasters, newspapers, and cable providers. Currently, Sonoma County is assessing the need for purchasing airtime and print space in local media markets. Postcards will also be sent to residents located in targeted WEA test areas. Additionally, the information will be posted on multiple websites and distributed on various social media accounts throughout Sonoma County and surrounding jurisdictions.

FES will work with participating CMS providers and EAS participants that operate within Sonoma County. All emergency response agencies that operate within and adjacent to Sonoma County, including first responder organizations such as Law Enforcement, Fire/EMS agencies, and 911 public safety answering points (PSAPS), will be informed to ensure they are aware of the test and confirm to the public the WEA/EAS message is a test. In addition, a steering committee will aid in developing the exercise plan and communicate it with key stakeholder agencies.

Subsequent to the test, FES will execute the evaluation element of the exercise plan. The evaluation will have three components, several hundred staff and volunteers strategically located within the test area to evaluate the WEA capabilities, responses provided by the public through the website survey, and a contractor who will be telephonically surveying residents within Sonoma County.

We appreciate the opportunity to partner with the FCC and FEMA to test the WEA functionality within Sonoma County. Thank you for your consideration!

Respectfully,



Jim Colangelo
Interim Director