

city of eagan

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

THOMAS EGAN
Mayor

PATRICIA AWADA
BEA BLOMQUIST
SANDRA A. MASIN
THEODORE WACHTER
Council Members

THOMAS HEDGES
City Administrator

E. J. VAN OVERBEKE
City Clerk

July 8, 1998

Magalie Roman Salas
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, W, Room 222
Washington, DC 20554

Ex Parte Letter Re: Cases FL 91-171; FO 91-301

Dear Secretary Salas:

Enclosed are two (2) copies of an ex parte presentation in the above-referenced proceedings.

Sincerely,

Thomas A Egan
Mayor

Enclosure

TAE/vmd

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city of eagan

July 7, 1998

Chairman William Kennard
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street NW, Room 814
Washington, DC 20554

Ex Parte Filing in cases FO 91-171, FO 91-301

Dear Chairman Kennard:

The City of Eagan, Minnesota requests that you reject the proposed change to the Emergency Alert (EAS) rules. As our cable system's EAS has served us well for almost 15 years, we are very concerned about the negative effect your new rules will have on our community's 16,000 cable subscribers.

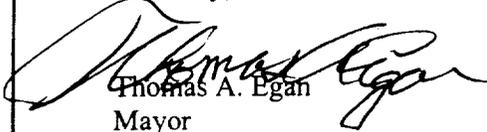
The concept that the broadcast stations will be able to serve local needs with the revised emergency alert rules is not entirely accurate. The Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area is approximately 75 miles across, with Eagan on the southern boundary. While the broadcasters provide useful information, only our local cable system has the capability of alerting our residents to specific, emergency warnings including not only storms but also other types of emergency situations. Let me provide two recent examples.

Within a period of two weeks this May, our community was hit with two severe storms, causing millions of dollars in damage. At any given moment, the majority of cable viewers are watching more of the non-broadcast channels combined than the broadcast channels, and it is by transmitting the EAS on *all* the channels, that we are able to alert our community in a timely fashion. In fact, part of our brief but specific EAS announcement includes turning to the broadcast channels for more information. While we cannot directly attribute the cable system's EAS to minimizing the number of injuries in the recent storms, which were very few, it must be assumed it has helped numerous times over the years.

As a result of the second devastating storm, our neighboring, joint-powers cable franchised city, Burnsville called a "state of emergency." The City of Burnsville used the EAS to inform those residents, who still had electricity, to turn to the government access channel for updates and specific announcements germane to only their residents. No broadcast channel can be this specific in nature.

For almost 15 years, our cable system's EAS has perhaps been the single most important aspect of our cable television system. It has become a demonstrated and valuable need of the cable franchise. To eliminate our local authority to continue the EAS in our renewed franchise could put our residents at an unnecessary risk. This does not make sense. Please reconsider the proposed rules. Thank you.

Sincerely,


Thomas A. Egan
Mayor

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