

## WHAT ARE EMERGENCY ALERTS?

Public safety officials have developed prompt and dependable systems to warn the public of possible impending danger. But you must have a device (cell phone, weather radio, etc.) that is properly set on and ready to receive them. Please review the various warning systems, such as tornado and severe thunderstorm sirens and local weather alerts listed below.



(National Weather Service infographic illustrating how to get severe weather alerts.)

### **What are the main types of Emergency Alerts?**

When an emergency or disaster strikes, public safety agencies use different types of alerts to send emergency information to your cell phone, landline, radio, or television.

- [Wireless Emergency Alerts \(WEA\)](#) and Integrated

Public Alert/ Warning System (IPAWS) provides life-saving information quickly. If an emergency is nearby, a government agency sends a vibration, loud tone, and short message through your phone. You must have a cell phone that is WEA enabled to receive alerts. You don't need to sign up and there is no charge to you. You should check the settings in your phone to make sure the alerts are activated.

- **Mass Notification Systems**, like a reverse 9-1-1, send an alert to your landline phone if you are in an affected area. To see how to register for these notifications in your area, do an Internet search for your city or county to see which system is used for Mass Notifications and if you need to opt into this service. For example, here are links to Google searches for the Mass Notification Systems in the [Shelby County/Memphis](#) and [Metro Nashville](#) where '[Smart911](#)' allows citizens to proactively provide details on their family and home that 9-1-1 operators may need in order to send help during an emergency. Smart911 is free, secure, and only the 911 operators see your information.

- [Outdoor Warning Sirens](#) warn you to get inside immediately for more information. **Do NOT rely on Outdoor Sirens to notify you in your home or workplace. These sirens are not everywhere and can only be heard outside!**
- [NOAA All-Hazards Weather Radio](#) NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) allows the nearest National Weather office to broadcast continuous weather information to a network of nationwide radio stations. The radio will broadcast loud alert sounds during an emergency. If the power is out and your TV is not working, these radios can still broadcast continuous weather and emergency information specific to your area, 24/7. **Every household should have a NOAA weather radio!**
- [ReadyTN](#) is a mobile app for your phone from the [Tennessee Emergency Management Agency \(TEMA\)](#) providing emergency preparedness, current response, and recovery information to Tennesseans, including information on road conditions, weather updates, open shelters, contacts for county emergency agencies and more. The ReadyTN app and the [TEMA Prepare webpage](#) also has resources to help individuals **build emergency kits, create emergency plans** for themselves and their families, and learn about the emergency hazards Tennesseans face.
- [Emergency Alert Systems](#) can also be used by state and local officials to deliver important emergency messages to your TV or Radio. For more detailed information see [Tennessee Emergency Alert System plan pdf.](#)
- [FEMA Mobile App and Text Messages](#) - **Features in the App:**
  - Receive **real-time alerts** from the National Weather Service for up to five locations nationwide.
  - **Share** real-time notifications with loved ones via text, email, and social media
  - Learn **emergency safety tips** for over 20 types of disasters, including fires, flooding, hurricanes, snowstorms, tornadoes, volcanoes and more.
  - Locate open emergency **shelters** and **disaster recovery centers** in your area where you can talk to a FEMA representative in person.
  - Prepare for disasters with a customizable **emergency kit checklist, emergency family plan, and reminders.**
  - [Connect with FEMA to register for disaster assistance online.](#)

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