



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 8, 2011

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Nationwide Test of the Emergency Alert System Scheduled **Area 9-1-1 Administrators Ask Public to Reserve 9-1-1 Lines** **For Emergency Calls During Test**

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are conducting the first ever nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) on: **Wednesday, Nov. 9, 2011 at 1 p.m. CST.**

The test will last approximately 30 seconds and will be heard on all radio, local television, cable and satellite television systems, simultaneously. Although the national EAS test may resemble the periodic, monthly EAS tests that most Americans are familiar with, there will be some differences in what viewers will see and hear.

Greater Harris County 9-1-1 (GHC 9-1-1), Galveston County Emergency Communication District and Montgomery County Emergency Communication District, along with local emergency management offices want to make sure the public is aware that this is only a test, and that they should not call 9-1-1 to inquire about the exercise.

"We have alerted our 9-1-1 call centers about the possibility for increased call volume during the November 9th test," said Sonya Clauson, GHC 9-1-1 public information office. "We want to make sure the system is available for actual emergency calls requiring a response from police, fire or emergency medical services. If 9-1-1 lines are occupied with those calling to inquire about the test, individuals calling to report true emergencies are at risk of a delayed response," said Clauson.

The National EAS is a public alert and warning system that enables the President of the United States to address the American public during extreme emergencies. The FCC and the FEMA will initiate the test from Washington, D.C.

The following are key messages for the public regarding the national EAS:

1. The public is reminded this broadcast is only a TEST.
2. Calls to 9-1-1 to inquire about the test are considered nonemergency calls. These types of calls may overwhelm the telephone network at emergency call centers and delay 9-1-1 from receiving calls from citizens reporting real emergencies. Please help us ensure that callers with actual emergencies can get through to 9-1-1.
3. Only call 9-1-1 if you have an actual emergency requiring a response from police, fire or emergency medical services (EMS).

Resources: www.911.org

<http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/emergency-alert-system-nationwide-test>

www.KnoWhat2Do.com

Video: RADM Jamie Barnett, Jr., Chief of FCC's Public Safety and Homeland Security

Bureau http://www.nab.org/documents/landingPages/barnett_fcc.asp

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