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Federal Communications Commission



**EAS**  
Emergency Alert System

**Handbook for November 9, 2011  
Nationwide EAS Test**

**Post at All EAS Equipment Locations**

## INTRODUCTION



The Emergency Alert System (EAS) is a national public warning system that requires broadcasters, cable television systems, wireless cable systems, wireline video providers, satellite digital audio radio service providers and direct broadcast satellite service providers to make their communications facilities available to the President during a national emergency. The system also may be used by state and local authorities to deliver important emergency information such as AMBER (child abduction) alerts and severe weather warnings targeted to specific geographical regions or areas.

This handbook provides EAS Participants with instructions for participating in the first nationwide test of the EAS, scheduled for November 9, 2011, at 2:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time. A copy of the Handbook must be located at normal duty positions or EAS equipment locations where an operator is required to be on duty and must immediately be made available to staff responsible for participating in the test.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** This handbook will supersede all other EAS Handbooks only during the operation of the Nationwide EAS Test on November 9, 2011.

For more detailed information, refer to the FCC's Nationwide EAS Test web site at: [www.fcc.gov/nationwideeasestest](http://www.fcc.gov/nationwideeasestest)

## HELPFUL INFORMATION

### Who Must Participate:

Broadcasters, cable television systems, wireless cable systems, wireline video providers, satellite digital audio radio service providers and direct broadcast satellite service providers are defined as EAS Participants under Federal Communications Commission (FCC) rules (47 CFR §§11.1, *et seq.*). FCC rules require that all EAS Participants install and maintain EAS equipment.

EAS Participants carry state and local EAS alerts on a voluntary basis and may choose not to provide a national alert as a Non-participating National (NN) source. However, under FCC rules, all EAS Participants, including NN sources, are required to participate in tests of the EAS. Accordingly, all EAS Participants must participate in the November 9, 2011 Nationwide EAS Test.

### Nature of Nationwide EAS Test:

Although state and local EAS tests already occur on a weekly and monthly basis, respectively, the November 9th test will be the first end-to-end test of the nationwide system, involving all EAS Participants in a synchronized, simultaneous exercise. The purpose of the November 9th Nationwide EAS Test is to make sure that the nationwide system will work as designed. Accordingly, this initial Nationwide EAS Test will have some specific differences from the weekly and monthly tests that EAS Participants generally perform.

For more detailed information, refer to the FCC's Nationwide EAS Test web site at: [www.fcc.gov/nationwideeasestest](http://www.fcc.gov/nationwideeasestest)

## HELPFUL INFORMATION (cont'd.)

The following elements of the Nationwide EAS Test are necessary to ensure a thorough testing of the national EAS distribution system:

- The Nationwide EAS Test will use the Emergency Action Notification (EAN) Event code, the Event code that would be used in an actual national emergency.
- The test will last approximately 30 seconds.
- The audio portion of the test will state: "This is a Test." However, for video service providers (a category that includes broadcast, cable, satellite, and wireline video providers), the EAN code will automatically generate a text crawl that will say "A Primary Entry Point station has issued an Emergency Action Notification . . ." The text crawl will not indicate that the event is a test. (Please see page 12 for manufacturer-specific text crawls).
  - FCC rules require only that video service providers transmit a visual message containing the information resident in the EAS header code. There is no EAN test code at this time, and the information within the EAN header code cannot be altered.
  - To minimize public confusion and to ensure that the test is fully accessible, video service provider EAS Participants are encouraged to insert a separate visual element during the test to indicate to their viewers that "THIS IS A TEST" if doing so is technically and operationally feasible and does not interfere with the operation of the underlying test. A model graphic is provided as Appendix A.

For more detailed information, refer to the FCC's Nationwide EAS Test web site at: [www.fcc.gov/nationwideeasestest](http://www.fcc.gov/nationwideeasestest)

## HELPFUL INFORMATION (cont'd.)

### Structure of EAS

The EAS is a hierarchical, broadcast-based alert message distribution system where EAS Participants receive an EAS alert through specially designed equipment and pass it on by means of that same equipment to the public and other EAS Participants until all EAS Participants, and by extension the American public, have received the alert. For a national alert, FEMA will deliver the EAN directly to its currently designated Primary Entry Point (PEP) National Primary (NP) stations, FEMA-designated radio broadcast stations that are tasked with receiving and transmitting national EAS alerts. The NPs are monitored by a series of State Primary (SP) and/or Local Primary (LP) stations, which themselves are monitored by all other EAS Participating National (PN) sources. PN's include radio and television broadcasters, cable television service providers, DBS service providers, Satellite Digital Audio Radio Service (SDARS) providers, and wireline video systems. At present, the United States is divided into approximately 550 EAS local areas, each of which contains at least two Local Primary stations: "Local Primary One" (LP1) and "Local Primary Two" (LP2).

All EAS Participants must monitor a minimum of two EAS sources. The monitoring assignments are specified in State EAS Plans that are filed with the FCC. EAS Participants that need to review their plans may do so at <http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/state-eas-plans-and-chairs>. Other sources that EAS Participants may monitor include other broadcast and satellite services. *The National Weather Service Radio will not be a source of, nor will it rebroadcast, the Nationwide EAS Test.*

For more detailed information, refer to the FCC's Nationwide EAS Test web site at: [www.fcc.gov/nationwideeasestest](http://www.fcc.gov/nationwideeasestest)

## HELPFUL INFORMATION (cont'd.)

If an EAS Participant determines that it cannot successfully monitor the EAS sources in its State EAS Plan, the EAS Participant should contact the FCC as soon as possible prior to the test to arrange for an alternative monitoring assignment. Please see page 20 for FCC contact information.

### EAS Equipment Readiness

EAS Participants are responsible for ensuring that EAS encoders and decoders are installed and configured so that the monitoring and transmitting functions are available during the times that the station is in operation.

- FEMA has assembled a set of EAS Best Practices which EAS Participants may adopt to ensure that they are maintaining their EAS equipment in good working order. These best practices may be found on FEMA's Nationwide EAS Test web site at: [www.fema.gov/emergency/ipaws/eas\\_info.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/emergency/ipaws/eas_info.shtm).
- EAS Participants are encouraged to consult with their equipment manufacturers if they have any questions about the proper installation and configuration of their EAS encoders and decoders.

### EAS Test - Result Reporting

As required by FCC Rules, EAS Participants must report and submit test results to the Commission by December 27, 2011 (45 days after the test date). Participants may file the required test result data either in paper format or electronically. EAS Participants that choose to file paper submissions must do so no later than December 27, 2011, and must file an original and one copy of each filing with the Commission by hand, messenger delivery, commercial overnight courier, or first class or overnight U.S.

For more detailed information, refer to the FCC's Nationwide EAS Test web site at: [www.fcc.gov/nationwideeasestest](http://www.fcc.gov/nationwideeasestest)

47 CFR § 11.15

## HELPFUL INFORMATION (cont'd.)

Postal Service mail addressed to the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, ATTN: Nationwide EAS Test, 445 12th Street, SW, Washington DC 20554. EAS Participants must mark the top of each page of their submissions: "Confidential – Not for Public Inspection."

To facilitate a less burdensome electronic filing mechanism, the Commission has activated the Nationwide EAS Test Reporting System. The Nationwide EAS Test Reporting System is comprised of the following three web-based forms:

- **Form 1** will ask each EAS Participant for identifying and background information, including EAS designation, EAS monitoring assignments, facility location, equipment type, and contact information. EAS Participants may access Form 1 throughout the reporting period, until December 27, 2011.
- **Form 2** will ask each EAS Participant whether it received the Nationwide EAS Test EAN alert code and, if required to do so, whether the EAS Participant propagated the EAN alert code downstream. Form 2 will be available beginning November 9, the day of the Nationwide EAS Test. EAS Participants may access Form 2 throughout the reporting period, until December 27, 2011.
- **Form 3** will ask each EAS Participant to submit detailed information regarding its receipt and retransmission (if applicable) of the EAN alert code, including an explanation of any complications in receiving or retransmitting the code. Such details will include what time (including time zone) the alert code was received, the time of retransmission of the EAN alert code, and the source from which the alert code was received. EAS Participants must have filled out Form 1 to be able to access Form 3. Form 3 will be available simultaneously with Form 2 on Wednesday, November 9, 2011. EAS Participants may access Form 3 throughout the reporting period, until December 27, 2011.

For more detailed information, refer to the FCC's Nationwide EAS Test web site at: [www.fcc.gov/nationwideeasestest](http://www.fcc.gov/nationwideeasestest)

47 CFR § 11.15

## Nationwide EAS Test Activation Procedures

- **All EAS Participants** must take part in the November 9, 2011 Nationwide EAS Test as required by FCC Rules and must follow FCC Rule requirements.
- **Post this handbook.** A copy of the Handbook must be located at normal duty positions or EAS equipment locations where an operator is required to be on duty and must immediately be made available to staff responsible for participating in the test. 47 CFR § 11.15

The following pages will guide you through what will occur and what you must do for this first Nationwide EAS Test.

47 CFR § 11.15

## Nationwide EAS Test Activation Procedures

### Before November 9, 2011:

- Set your EAS equipment for automatic relay if possible.
- Review FEMA Best Practices to make sure your EAS equipment is set and configured correctly ([www.fema.gov/emergency/ipaws/eas\\_info.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/emergency/ipaws/eas_info.shtm)).
- Consult with your equipment manufacturer if you have any questions about the proper installation and configuration of your EAS equipment.
- Review your State EAS Plan to confirm your EAS designation and monitoring obligations (<http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/state-eas-plans-and-chairs>).
- **Remember: National Weather Radio is not a source of the Emergency Action Notification (EAN).**
- Enter your identifying data into the Nationwide EAS Test Reporting Database - <http://www.fcc.gov/nationwideeasestest>.
- **Video systems - Review the manner in which you plan to insert the on-air "THIS IS A TEST" graphic.**

47 CFR § 11.15

## Nationwide EAS Test Activation Procedures (Wednesday, November 9, 2011 - 2:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time)

### 1 Receive the Emergency Action Notification (EAN) message.

#### Automatic and Manual Operation

- You will hear the EAS tones.
- You will **see the words** "Emergency Action Notification" on the EAS decoder display.

47 CFR § 11.15

## Nationwide EAS Test Activation Procedures

### 2 Transmit the EAS header codes followed by the attention signal.

**For Automatic Operation:**  
EAS equipment will retransmit header codes and the attention signal.

**For Manual Operation:** Use the EAS encoder to retransmit the header codes and the attention signal.

**Video providers must visually display expanded header text and aurally transmit header data.**

- **EAS Equipment Manufacturer Sample EAN Header Code Scripts (local time may be substituted for 2:00 p.m. EST):**
  - **SAGE:** A Primary Entry Point system has issued an Emergency Action Notification for the United States beginning at 2:00 p.m. Wed and ending at 4:00 pm.
  - **TFT:** A Primary Entry Point station has issued an emergency action notification for the following counties/areas: Washington, DC at 2:00 p.m. on November 9, 2011, effective until 4:00 p.m.
  - **Trititic:** A Primary Entry Point system has issued an emergency action notification for the United States, effective until 11/09/11 4:00:00 EST.
  - **Monroe Electronics/Digital Alert Systems:** The National Primary EAS system has issued an emergency action notification for: District of Columbia, DC; at 2:00 p.m. on Nov 09, 2011, effective until ended by national emergency termination alert.

- **Video Providers are encouraged to provide a slide or other visual image indicating that:**  
**THIS IS A TEST**

47 CFR § 11.15

## Nationwide EAS Test Activation Procedures

### 3 Interrupt normal programming.



**Participating Systems:** Follow Steps 4 - 7 of the Nationwide EAS Test Activation Procedures.

**Non-Participating Systems:** Follow Steps 8 - 11 of the Nationwide EAS Test Activation Procedures.

## Nationwide EAS Test Activation Procedures

### Immediately After Test

An Emergency Action Termination (EAT) Event code **will not** be used to terminate the test.

<b>5</b>	<b>Transmit the End of Message (EOM) code</b>	<p><b>For Automatic Operation:</b> The EAS encoder will automatically transmit the EOM code.</p> <p><b>For Manual Operation:</b> Use the EAS encoder to transmit the EOM code.</p>
<b>6</b>	<b>Resume programming</b>	Resume normal programming.
<b>7</b>	<b>Log</b>	<p>Log initial test results into the Nationwide EAS Test Reporting System.</p> <p>Log into the database and indicate whether your facility received the EAN alert code and, if required to do so, propagated the code within the EAS architecture.</p>

## Nationwide EAS Test Activation Procedures (Non-Participating Systems)

### Immediately After Test

An Emergency Action Termination (EAT) Event code **will not** be used to terminate the test.

<b>9</b>	<b>Transmit the End of Message (EOM) code</b>	<p><b>For Automatic Operation:</b> The EAS encoder will automatically transmit the EOM code.</p> <p><b>For Manual Operation:</b> Use the EAS encoder to transmit the EOM code.</p>
<b>10</b>	<b>Resume programming</b>	Resume normal programming.
<b>11</b>	<b>Log</b>	<p>Log initial test results into the Nationwide EAS Test Reporting System.</p> <p>Log into the database and indicate whether your facility received the EAN alert code and, if required to do so, propagated the code within the EAS architecture.</p>

## Nationwide EAS Test Activation Procedures

### 4 Transmit the EAN Nationwide Test Message.

**For Automatic Operation:**  
No action necessary.

**For Manual Operation:** Discontinue regular programming and prepare to transmit the EAN Nationwide Test Message.



#### Emergency Action Notification Audio Message (sample)

This is a test of the Emergency Alert System. [PAUSE] This is only a Test. The message you are hearing is part of a nationwide live code Test of Emergency Alert System capabilities. This Test message has been initiated by national alert and warning authorities in coordination with Emergency Alert System Participants, including broadcast, cable, satellite, and wireline participants in your area. Had this been an actual emergency, the attention signal you just heard would have been followed by emergency information, news, or instructions. Remember, this is only a Test. The EAS is also used by State, Territorial, Tribal, and local authorities to alert and warn the public and provide important emergency response information. Remember, this is only a Test. Please stay with this Test message as it will be repeated... [PAUSE]

## Nationwide EAS Test Activation Procedures (Non-Participating Systems)

### 8 Transmit this announcement.

*This announcement should be pre-recorded if automatic operation is used.*

**For Manual Operation** transmit the following:



#### Make this Announcement

This is a nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System. This test will last for approximately 30 seconds.

During this test, most television and radio providers will remain on the air to participate in the test.

This is (station name). We will be discontinuing programming for the duration of the test.

Our programming will resume at the end of the test, in approximately 30 seconds.

**REPEAT ANNOUNCEMENT**

## Nationwide EAS Test Result Reporting Procedures

Log into the Nationwide EAS Test Reporting System to complete result reports to the FCC  
[www.fcc.gov/nationwideeast](http://www.fcc.gov/nationwideeast)

- **Prior to November 9, 2011** – Fill out Form 1 by providing identifying and background information, including EAS designation, EAS monitoring assignments, facility location, equipment type, and contact information. (Form 1 will remain accessible throughout the reporting period, until December 27, 2011.)
- **On November 9, 2011** – Fill out Form 2 by indicating whether you received the Nationwide EAS Test EAN alert code and, if you are required to do so, whether you propagated the alert code downstream. (Form 2 will be available beginning November 9, the day of the Nationwide EAS Test, and will remain accessible throughout the reporting period, until December 27, 2011.)
- **On or After November 9, 2011** – Fill out Form 3 by submitting detailed information regarding your receipt and retransmission, if applicable, of the EAN alert code, including explanation of any complications in receiving or retransmitting the alert code. (To access Form 3, you must have filled out Form 1. Form 3 will be available simultaneously with Form 2 on November 9, 2011, and will remain accessible throughout the reporting period, until December 27, 2011.)
- EAS Participants may also file paper submissions no later than December 27, 2011, by filing an original and one copy of each filing with the Commission by hand, messenger delivery, commercial overnight courier, or first class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail, addressed to the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission, ATTN: Nationwide EAS Test, 445 12th Street, SW, Washington DC 20554. EAS Participants must mark the top of each page of their submissions: "Confidential – Not for Public Inspection."

**Test result data is presumptively confidential**

