
Emergency Telephone Notification System - Alert OC

351.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This procedure describes use of the Emergency Telephone Notification System, also referred to in the public safety industry as “Reverse 911” or “Mass Notification”. In the City of Irvine and the County of Orange, this system is referred to as “Alert OC”. This procedure also defines the criteria for system activation and the preferred content of the message to be sent to the community.

351.2 SYSTEM DEFINED

The emergency telephone notification system is an internet based emergency warning system that assists department personnel in making concise, essential emergency notifications in a timely manner. This system allows department personnel, at the direction of the Incident Commander, PIO or Emergency Management Administrator, to initiate a voice message broadcast to an unlimited number of residential and business telephones in predetermined geographic locations or from a pre-defined group. The system utilizes the 911 database to complete the notifications.

The company used by this department to facilitate the Emergency Telephone Notifications System is Everbridge. Also, the Orange County Sheriff's Department Control One can provide message assistance 24/7.

351.3 LEGAL AUTHORITY

Use of the 911 database is regulated by the California Public Utilities Code. The information contained in the 911 database is confidential and proprietary, and therefore shall not be disclosed or utilized except by authorized personnel for the purposes permitted by law. While the system was initially designed for hard-line phones, the public can provide cellular or voice-over Internet Protocol (VoIP) phone numbers for entry into the emergency telephone notification systems database via the City of Irvine’s Internet website.

This policy is based, in part, on the authority afforded to local agencies to record, schedule, send, and track voice and text messages in order to provide emergency related information to the public. The development of emergency notification system technologies “to provide information about vulnerabilities and protective measures” is also supported by the United States Office of Homeland Security. Additionally, the “National Emergency Number Association” supports the acquisition and deployment of emergency notification systems to increase homeland security and to address domestic protection concerns.

351.4 ACTIVATION AUTHORITY

Prior to activation of Alert OC, the Incident Commander (the department representative in charge of an incident who is at or above the rank of Sergeant), PIO or Emergency Management Administrator shall adhere to the following protocol:

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- (a) Determine whether the incident necessitates use of Alert OC by evaluating the “Activation Criteria” as contained in this policy.
- (b) If use of Alert OC is determined to be warranted, the Incident Commander shall develop an appropriate notification message for review and approval by the on-duty Command Officer.
- (c) Evaluate and determine the geographic area or group to receive the notification message.
- (d) The Incident Commander shall receive approval by the on duty Command Officer prior to sending a notification message using Alert OC.
 - 1. In the absence or unavailability of an on-duty Command Officer, the Incident Commander shall follow the notification procedures as defined in the Major Incident Notification Protocol prior to activation of I Alert.
 - 2. The duty Command Officer or designee shall be responsible for immediately notifying appropriate Command Staff regarding the nature of the incident and use of Alert OC.
- (e) Use of the Alert OC Text-to-Speech function is prohibited.

351.5 ACTIVATION CRITERIA

The following activation criteria shall be taken into consideration and weighed by the Incident Commander or appropriate staff when considering use of the Alert OC system.

- (a) Severity: Is there a significant threat to the public life and safety?
- (b) Public Protection: Is there a need for the public to take a protective action to reduce loss of life or substantial loss of property?
- (c) Warning: Will providing warning information assist members of the public in making the decision to take proper and prudent action?
- (d) Timing: Does the situation require immediate public knowledge in order to avoid adverse impacts?
- (e) Geographic Area: Is the situation limited to a defined geographic area? Is that area a size that will allow for an effective use of the system, given the outgoing call capacity?
- (f) Resources: Are other means of disseminating information in a timely manner inadequate or unavailable?

351.6 AUTHORIZED ACTIVATION EVENTS

- (a) Priority Emergency Messages:
 - 1. Barricaded criminal suspects, requiring shelter in place
 - 2. Special Weapons and Tactics responses
 - 3. Active shooter/armed suspect incident
 - 4. Robbery involving a deadly weapon

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5. Violent rape with an outstanding suspect
 6. Kidnapping or Amber Alert
 7. Aggravated assault with a deadly weapon
 8. Hostage situations or other major police activity, requiring resident action
 9. Bomb threats requiring evacuation or shelter in place
 10. Homeland Security/Attack – impending or actual attack
 11. Aviation incident
 12. Prisoner/custody escapes
 13. Brush or structure fire requiring immediate evacuation
 14. National emergency declared by the President of the United States
 15. Emergency declared by the Governor of the State of California
 16. Other severe emergencies as directed by the Mayor, City Manager or Director of Public Safety
- (b) Priority Notification Messages:
1. Earthquake related information
 2. Severe Weather Alerts issued by the National Weather Services
 3. Local flash flooding or high wind advisories requiring immediate action
 4. Evacuation notices
 5. Shelter openings and locations
 6. Extended water, electrical or gas main breaks or outages
 7. Water quality issues
 8. “All Clear” message
- (c) Public health alerts:
1. Infectious disease outbreak
 2. Immunization/vaccination notices
 3. Biological, chemical, gas or hazardous material alert
 4. Boil-water alerts
 5. Dangerous wild animal alert
- (d) City staff/department notifications and Volunteer Groups:
1. Personnel call back
 2. CERT Activation
 3. IDEC Activation
- (e) Annual Testing Public Opt-In and Groups ONLY

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351.7 PROHIBITED USES

- (a) Political messages, advertisement or solicitation of campaign contributions
- (b) Non-municipal “for-profit” or “non-profit” activity or solicitation
- (c) Non-official business information (i.e. news, articles, retirement announcements, etc.)
- (d) Messages of a commercial nature
- (e) Routine informational or educational messages

351.8 MESSAGE CONTENT

- (a) Source of the message: The message should clearly identify the person issuing the alert (department, name and rank/title) and indicate the time and date.
- (b) Description of hazard or risk: The warning message shall describe the event that has occurred (or may occur) and the danger that it poses. The hazard should be described in sufficient detail so that all members of the public can understand the character of the threat from which they are to protect themselves.
- (c) Location of the hazard: The message should also describe the geographic areas that are at risk. The details of the location should be described in terms easily understood by the public using well known landmarks and geographic boundaries.
- (d) Guidance for protective actions: The message should include information on what people should do to protect themselves.
- (e) Time available to act: Public warnings must also address the “when” aspect of the response. The warning message should include information on the time available for those in the affected area to take the appropriate protective action.
- (f) Information/status: Where to get further information, if applicable.

351.8.1 SAMPLE ALERT OC MESSAGES

See attachment: [Alert OC Message Templates.pdf](#)

Attachments

Alert OC Message Templates.pdf

Alert OC Message Templates

- a. Source of the message: The message **must** identify that the alert is being issued by the City of Irvine/Irvine Police Department;
- b. Description of hazard: The message **must** describe the event that has occurred (or may occur) and the threat that it poses to the public. The hazard must be described clearly and in such a way that any member of the general public should be able to understand (i.e. avoid acronyms).
- c. Location of the hazard: The message **must** describe the geographic area(s) threatened or at risk. The details of the location should be described using well-known landmarks, cross streets, and/or geographic boundaries.
- d. Protective action: The message **must** include the protective action to be taken such as “evacuate,” “shelter-in-place,” or “stay clear ”
- e. Information/status: Whenever possible, the message should include a link to social media, city website, or another source where the public can go to get additional information.
- f. All Clear Message For any issued alert, there must be an “ALL CLEAR” message issued once the threat has been contained or mitigated. See last message template for guidance.

Emergency Message Templates

Wildfire - Evacuation

SMS/Text & Email:

Subject: “Wildfire - Evacuation”

Content: Irvine PD has issued an immediate evacuation order for the ----- community/area due to the current wildfire. DONT WAIT LEAVE NOW. Check facebook.com/IrvinePD/ for more information.

Voice: An immediate evacuation order for the ----- community/area (**use major cross streets or landmarks**) has been issued by the Irvine Police Department due to the current wildfire. It is ----- (**date**) at ----- (**time**) and police officers are enforcing the immediate evacuation order. Please take this warning seriously and leave now. An evacuation reception site has been established at the ----- community center. Please check facebook.com/IrvinePD/ regularly for updates.

Police Activity – Shelter in Place

SMS/Text & Email:

Subject: "Police Activity – Shelter in Place"

Content: Irvine PD has issued a Shelter in Place order for the ----- community/area due to an armed subject. Subject is described as ----- . STAY INSIDE. Lock doors/windows. If seen, do not approach.

Voice: The Irvine Police Department has issued a Shelter in Place order for the ----- community/area (use major cross streets or landmarks) due to current police activity. It is ----- (date) at ----- (time) and police officers are searching for an armed subject described as ----- (use known description, if any). For your personal safety, please stay inside your residence with your doors and windows locked. If you must leave your residence, please use caution. If you are not in the area, please stay clear until further notice. Please check facebook.com/IrvinePD/ regularly for updates.

Hazardous Material – Shelter in Place

SMS/Text & Email:

Subject: "Hazardous Material – Shelter in Place"

Content: Irvine PD has issued a Shelter in Place order for ----- due to the presence of a Hazardous Material. Stay inside. Close doors/windows. Shutoff heating/air. facebook.com/IrvinePD/ for more.

Voice: The Irvine Police Department has issued a Shelter in Place order for the ----- community/area (use major cross streets or land marks) due to a Hazardous Material (spill, release, etc.). It is ----- (date) at ----- (time). First responders are on scene. For your safety, please remain inside. Close your doors and windows. Shutoff all heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems. If you are not in the area, stay clear until further notice. Please check facebook.com/IrvinePD/ regularly for updates.

Natural Gas Leak - Evacuation

SMS/Text & Email:

Subject: "Natural Gas Leak - Evacuation"

Content: Irvine PD has issued an immediate evacuation order for the ----- community/area due to a gas leak DON T WAIT LEAVE NOW Emergency responders are on scene. See [facebook.com/IrvinePD/](https://www.facebook.com/IrvinePD/) for more.

Voice: The Irvine Police Department has issued an immediate evacuation order for the ----- community/area (use major cross streets or landmarks) due to a natural gas leak. It is ----- (date) at ----- (time). Police officers are enforcing the immediate evacuation order. Please take this warning seriously and leave now. An evacuation reception site has been established at ----- community center. Please check [facebook.com/IrvinePD/](https://www.facebook.com/IrvinePD/) regularly for updates.

Earthquake – Take Protective Action

SMS/Text & Email:

Subject: "Earthquake – Take Protective Action"

Content: Irvine PD is asking you to take protective action following the recent earthquake. Assess your surroundings. Shelter in Place if it is safe to do so; otherwise, leave. See [facebook.com/IrvinePD/](https://www.facebook.com/IrvinePD/) for more.

Voice: The Irvine Police Department is requesting that the community take protective action following the recent earthquake. It is ----- (date) at ----- (time). Irvine PD strongly encourages you to assess your surroundings in your home or business for safety-related concerns. Shutoff gas only if you can smell or hear a gas leak. Shelter in Place if it is safe to do so. If it is not safe, leave. Reception centers for those forced to leave their homes have been established at the following locations ----- . Please check www.facebook.com/IrvinePD/ regularly for updates.

*****All Clear Message*****

SMS/Text & Email:

Subject: "All Clear – Resume Normal Activity"

Content: "Irvine PD has confirmed that the previous threat notification issued for the ----- community/area has been contained or mitigated. ALL CLEAR. You may resume normal activity at this time. Thank you."

Voice: The Irvine Police Department has confirmed that the previous threat notification issued for the ----- community/area has been contained or mitigated. All is Clear at this time and you are free to resume normal activity. We thank you for your cooperation.
