

Testing of County-Wide Alert Notification System on May 15, 2009

On Friday May 15, the Hudson County Office of Emergency Management (HCOEM) will conduct a test of the Alert Notification System. This system is designed to alert County residents and visitors in the event of a major natural or man made hazard that would require residents to take some sort of action for their individual safety.

The system is designed to emit a tone that is audible throughout all inhabited areas of the County. When placed in full service, the system will alert residents and visitors of the need to turn to emergency broadcast channels to receive specific instructions as to what preventive measures should be taken. As part of the overall system, the HCOEM has acquired and is in the process of activating an AM radio station to be used in conjunction with the Alert Notification System to broadcast information to the public advising them as to specific actions that should be taken based on the nature of the emergency. Information concerning the specific station will be communicated throughout the County at the time the AM radio station is brought on line.

In addition to the audible tone the Alert Notification System also has the capability to transmit live voice messages to provide instructions to the public following activation of the system. The range for the live messages is not as great as that for the audible tone but will serve heavily populated areas as well as areas where large numbers of the public may converge, such as major transportation hubs and large commercial areas.

This system is intended to serve as another link in a chain of communication resources to be used to disseminate information to the public in the event of major natural or man-made emergency.

The system, which was installed at a cost of over \$750,000.00, was funded by a grant to the County of Hudson from the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security.

The system consists of a total of 31 Alert Notification units located on poles and roof tops throughout the County. The locations of the units were strategically selected to ensure tone coverage throughout the County as well as voice capability to critical areas.

While the test to be conducted on Friday May 15 is designed to determine that the system performs as designed throughout the County the entire County system will not be activated at one time. Specific units will be activated to test the coverage within specific geographic areas. The tests are designed to cover the following areas:

- * Kearny, Harrison, East Newark
- * North Bergen, Guttenberg, West New York, Weehawken, Union City and Hoboken
- * Secaucus
- * Jersey City
- * Bayonne

While there will be one test for each of these areas, there is a certain amount of overlap for certain units. As a result you may hear more than one activation in your neighborhood. For example, coverage in the Secaucus area relies in part on units located in North Bergen and Jersey City which will be activated during the test of coverage in Secaucus. Those same units in North Bergen and Jersey City may be activated a second time during the testing of coverage in Jersey City and the North Hudson Area.

The test of each area will consist of an announcement over the public address feature of the system followed by a tone activation of one to three minutes in duration. At the conclusion of the tone test for each area there will be a second announcement over the public address feature announcing the conclusion of the test.

The tests are scheduled to begin at approximately 9:00 AM on Friday May 15 and to conclude no later than 4:00 PM that day.

This is a test of the system and no individual action need be taken by any member of the public.

Following this initial test of the system future monthly tests will be conducted using the "silent test" feature of the system so as to minimize disturbance to the public.