

Annex 4: Emergency Alert System Plan for Lewis County

Revised July 2013

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Plan Revised By:



I. PURPOSE

1. To meet Federal guidelines set down for a plan by each county to be established by January 1, 1997.
2. To have a plan to alert the citizens of the affected areas of Lewis County of a natural or technical (including man-made) disaster.
3. To give advanced warning to potentially affected citizens on what steps should be taken to prevent injuries or deaths from occurring.

II. AUTHORITY

Title 47 U.S.C. 161, 154 (1) & (o), 303 (r), 524 (g) & 606; and 47 C.F.R. Part II, FCC Rules & Regulations, Emergency Alert System

III. OBJECTIVE

The objective of this plan is to document the steps to take for the proper notifications to the sending agency (National Weather Services or media resources) to notify the citizens of Lewis County of an impending emergency whether it be natural or technical (man made) to prevent injury or death.

This document will utilize certain aspects of the Lewis County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan and the Hazardous Materials Response Annex in order to properly activate the EAS. This plan contains procedures for local officials and/or the National Weather Service to transmit emergency information to the public during a local emergency using the EAS.

This document is intended to supplement existing procedures in the EAS New York State Plan as promulgated by the State Emergency Communications Commission. Acceptance of or participation in this plan shall not be deemed as a relinquishment of program control and shall not be deemed to prohibit a broadcast or cable licensee from exercising her/his independent discretion and responsibility in any given situation. Stations originating emergency communications shall be deemed to have conferred rebroadcast authority. The concept of management of each broadcast station and cable system exercising discretion during the broadcast of emergency instructions to the general public is provided by FCC rules.

IV. WHO CAN ACTIVATE THE PLAN

1. President
2. Governor
3. SOEM
4. Chief Executive and/or the Emergency Manager
5. National Weather Service

6. Media (radio, TV, cable) with authorization by one of the above.

V. AUTHENTICATION

1. The following authentication should be used in order to activate the EAS System:
The code word _____ (for emergencies) shall be kept in confidence by the Emergency Management Office and the Chairman of the Board of Legislature.
2. A return phone call to the appropriate number shall be made to verify the activation for emergencies.

VI. HAZARDS WHICH REQUIRE PLAN ACTIVATION

1. Hazardous materials incidents which require notification of residential areas, private industries, or municipalities (including schools) for evacuation or shelter-in-place.
2. Natural disaster (notification from National Weather Service probable).
3. Any other major emergency where public would need to be notified.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS WITH THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE

1. Communications with the National Weather Service will be for the following reasons:
 - a) A test of the Emergency Alert System
 - b) An actual emergency where the system needs to be activated.
2. Communications will be by the following means:
 - a) High band radio- SOME frequency
 - b) Regular telephone
 - c) NAWAS (Lewis County Emergency Management)
 - d) Cellular phone
 - e) Packet radio
 - f) High band radio - local government
 - g) If any of the above is not available, then a low band portable will be taken to the National Weather Service for use on XX frequency or state wide fire ground F-4 frequencies.

VIII. DEFINITIONS

1. Emergency - A situation posing an extraordinary threat to the safety of life and property. Examples are tornadoes, floods, earthquakes, icing conditions, heavy snows, widespread fires, discharge of toxic gases, widespread power failures, industrial explosions, civil disorders and radiological emergencies, etc.
2. Designated Local Government Officials - The person or persons designated by the state and local government as specified in New York State Article 2B, and located in the EOC.

IX. SAMPLE MESSAGES

1. Hazardous Materials

Lewis County Chairman has announced that an emergency condition exists at (insert area) and orders the evacuation of all persons living or working in Response Zone 1. Response Zone 1 includes_____.

2. Weather

The National Weather Service has issued a:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tornado Warning | <input type="checkbox"/> Tornado Watch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Severe Thunderstorm Warning | <input type="checkbox"/> Severe Thunderstorm Watch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flash Flood Warning | <input type="checkbox"/> Flash Flood Watch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Special Marine Warning | <input type="checkbox"/> Flood Watch |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lakeshore Warning | <input type="checkbox"/> High Wind Warning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Winter Storm Warning | <input type="checkbox"/> Blizzard Warning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flood Warning | |

For the following counties in New York State

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lewis | <input type="checkbox"/> Jefferson |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oswego | <input type="checkbox"/> St. Lawrence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oneida | <input type="checkbox"/> Herkimer |

(Note: May use portions of counties, as appropriate)

The (WARNING/WATCH) is in effect until (TIME AM/PM)

(BRIEF, short-fused information as to the location and movement of storms, communities to be affected and description of hazard.)

Stay tuned to local media for more information and further updates on this

WATCH/WARNING

Notes: This message should take no longer than 45 seconds to broadcast.

When completed, please initial this sheet and place on clipboard. Initials:

Each station must be called and password given along with who is authorizing it.

X. ACTIVATION OF EAS IN EMERGENCIES

A. WARNING OF ENDANGERED POPULATIONS

1. Emergency warnings may be received at the 911 Communication Center through the National Warning System (NAWAS) on a 24-hour basis.
2. Warnings and information are disseminated to the public over the Emergency Alert System (EAS). EAS is the “voice” of emergency public information.
3. The primary EAS program control station serving Lewis County is **WLLG**.
4. Notification of the public residing within an area exposed to a disaster will be accomplished by public address systems of local police and fire vehicles or door-to-door notification in rural and urban areas.
5. Special institutions such as schools, hospitals, nursing homes, major industries and places of public assembly will be notified individually. Arrangement will be made for warning the hearing impaired as conditions warrant.
6. Emergency warnings may be received at the EOC of the Department of Emergency Management –and the Lewis County Sheriff’s Department-Communication Center 24/7.

B. SITUATION REPORTING

1. The Emergency Manager will prepare the initial disaster situation report to be submitted to the County Chairman and the Region IV District Office of the State Office of Emergency Management (SOEM).

The report will contain the following information:

- a) Date and time of disaster
 - b) Type of disaster
 - c) General location of disaster
 - d) Specific area affected including the number of people
 - e) Number of injured (estimate)
 - f) Number of dead (estimate)
 - g) Damage or loss of municipal response equipment-assessment
 - h) Roads closed
 - i) Actions taken
2. The Emergency Manager or his designee will prepare follow-up reports.
 3. Statewide emergency situation reports will be received through the National Warning System (NAWAS) and the National Weather Service (NWS).

C. EMERGENCY PUBLIC INFORMATION

1. In consultation with the Emergency Manager or his designee, the Chief Executive will designate a County Public Information Officer (PIO) as the authoritative spokesperson for the county.
2. The County Public Information Officer (PIO) will:

- a) Establish a Public Information Center (PIC) from where to respond to inquiries from the general public and news media and coordinate all official announcements, statements and briefings.
 - b) Make arrangements with EAS to broadcast the location of PIC and designate a telephone number for the public to use to obtain information during the major emergency or disaster.
 - c) Be in charge of the PIC and assume overall responsibility for obtaining essential information for accurate and consistent reports to the broadcast media and press.
 - d) Authenticate all sources of information being received and verify accuracy.
 - e) Provide essential information and instructions including the appropriate protective actions to be taken by the public, to the broadcast media and press.
 - f) Coordinate the release of official announcements concerning public safety to the public with the key departments and agencies involved.
 - g) Clear all news releases with the Chief Executive.
 - h) Check and control the spreading of rumors.
 - i) Arrange and approve interviews with the news media and press by emergency personnel involved in the response operation.
 - j) Arrange any media and public tours of emergency sites with law enforcement personnel.
 - k) Inform the public about places of contact for missing persons and continued emergency services with the Red Cross.
 - l) Develop and keep updated Emergency Public Information (EPI) materials such as pamphlets with instructions as to what action to take (including instructions to groups when primary language is not English) - Linguistic Department SUNY Albany.
 - m) Make EPI materials available for distribution to the public and the use by the news media, including for the visually impaired.
 - n) Make written and/or oral agreements with the news media for dissemination of EPI and emergency warnings and establish points of contact.
 - o) Conduct annually information meetings with the news media to acquaint them with current emergency plans and procedures as necessary.
3. The PIC may be established at the EOC or at any location where information flow can be maintained without interfering with emergency operations.
 4. The PIC may be located at a "one-stop" center where citizens and news media can obtain information and assistance.

D. IMMEDIATE PROTECTIVE ACTION

1. Protective action for emergency workers involved in containment, mitigation, assessment and recovery operations will be specific to the situation and the organization involved. The purpose of all protective actions will be to minimize the hazard to emergency response workers and the general public.
2. Depending on the type of disaster, the County Health Department, State Health Department, and/or other designated local or state agencies will combine their efforts for monitoring and exposure control.
3. The initial protective action recommendations will be made to the County EOC and to the incident commander. Reports and records will be communicated to and coordinated by the EOC.

4. The assessment of data will be done at the EOC as follows:
 - a) All monitoring data received at the EOC will be plotted on overlays.
 - b) Meteorological data received from the agencies will be recorded and correlated with monitoring data to construct downwind hazard predictions.
 - c) These analyses will be compared to the more complex and definitive assessments received from state and federal sources.
5. The Chief Executive, on recommendation of County/State Health and/or other state technical assistance agencies, will order proper exposure control.

XI. TECHNICAL ANNEX TO LEWIS COUNTY'S EAS PLAN

A. EAS MESSAGE PRIORITIES

A national activation for a Presidential message with the event code EAN must take priority over any other message and preempt it if it is in progress.

EAS participants should transmit other EAS messages in the following order:

- a) Local Area Messages
- b) State Messages
- c) National Information Center (NIC) Messages

During a national emergency, the radio and television broadcast network program distribution facilities must be reserved exclusively for distribution for Presidential messages.

NIC messages received from national networks which are not broadcast at the time of original transmission must be recorded locally by LP sources for transmission at the earliest opportunity.

B. TRANSMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Transmissions may be either automatic or manual.

Transmissions must include:

- a) EAS header codes
- b) Attention signal
- c) Emergency message
- d) End of message (EQM)

C. VISUAL REQUIREMENTS

Effective July 1, 1997, television stations shall transmit a visual message containing the originator, event, location and the valid time period of an EAS message. If the message is a video crawl, it shall be displayed at the top of the television screen or where it will not interfere with other visual messages.

Television stations should ensure that pauses in video before EAS message transmissions do not cause television receivers to mute EAS audio messages.

D. TRANSMISSION REQUIREMENTS (CABLE)

Effective January 1, 1997, cable systems shall transmit EAS audio messages in the same order as broadcast stations. The attention signal may be produced from a storage device. Additionally, subject cable systems must:

1. Provide a video interruption and an audio EAS message on all channels. The audio message must state which channel is carrying the visual EAS message.

2. Subject cable systems shall transmit a visual EAS message on at least one channel. The message shall contain the originator, event, location and the valid time period of the EAS message. If the visual message is a video crawl, it shall be displayed at the top of the subscriber's television screen or where it will not interfere with other visual messages.
3. Cable systems shall provide a method to alert hearing impaired or deaf subscribers to EAS messages. Methods may include: a box that displays EAS messages and activates other alerting mechanisms or lights; visual messages on all channels; etc.
4. Cable systems may elect not to interrupt EAS messages from broadcast stations based on a written agreement between all concerned.

E. UNATTENDED REQUIREMENTS

Automatic interrupt of programming and transmission of EAS messages is required when facilities are unattended and must include a permanent record that contains a minimum of the following:

- a) Originator
- b) Event
- c) Location
- d) Valid time period of the message

The decoder performs the functions necessary to determine which EAS messages are automatically transmitted by the encoder.

F. RETRANSMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Participants are required to transmit all received EAS messages that have the following event codes:

- a) Emergency Action Notification (EAN)
- b) Emergency Action Termination (EAT)
- c) Required Monthly Test (RMT)
- d) and accompanying location codes for their state and state/county.

These EAS messages shall be retransmitted unchanged except for the LLLLLLLL-code which identifies the broadcast station or cable system retransmitting the message.

If an EAS source originates any EAS messages with the above event codes, it must include the location codes for the state and counties in its service area.

Retransmission must be within the following time frame:

- a) EAS messages with the EAN and EAT event codes must be transmitted immediately upon reception.
- b) Monthly EAS messages must be transmitted within 15 minutes of reception.

G. MONITORING REQUIREMENTS

Broadcast stations and subject cable systems must monitor two (2) EAS sources specified in the state EAS Plan and FCC Map book.

Broadcast station and cable system management will determine which header codes for state and local area emergency situations will automatically interrupt their programming.

H. TESTING REQUIREMENTS

Entries shall be made in the broadcast station or cable system records for all tests.

1. REQUIRED MONTHLY TESTS (RMT) CONSISTS OF THE TRANSMISSION OF:

- a) EAS header codes
- b) Attention signal
- c) Test script
- d) EOM code

Tests in odd numbered months: 8:30 a.m. to local sunset.

Tests in even numbered months: local sunset to 8:30 a.m.

Originate from local or state primary sources.

Must be re-transmitted within 15 minutes of receipt.

Class D FM and LPTV need to transmit only the test script.

2. REQUIRED WEEKLY TESTS (RWT) CONSISTS OF THE TRANSMISSION OF:

- a) a. EAS header codes
- b) b. EOM codes

Originated by stations once a week at random days and times.

Class D FM and LPTV not required to transmit, but must log receipt.

Not required during the week that a monthly test is conducted.

3. PERIODIC NATIONAL TESTS:

National Primary (NP) sources shall participate in tests as appropriate. The FCC may request a report of these tests.

4. CLOSED CIRCUIT TESTS OF NATIONAL LEVEL EAS FACILITIES:

Not more than once a month and not less than once every three months. Test times will be selected by the White House. The FCC will notify participants at least four (4) working days before the test.

I. CO-LOCATED OPTIONS

Broadcast stations or cable systems that are co-owned and co-located may provide the EAS transmitting requirements with one EAS encoder and the monitoring requirements with one EAS decoder.

J. REMOTE CONTROL OPTIONS

Either manual or automatic operation of EAS equipment may be used at broadcast stations or cable systems that use remote control

If manual operation is used, an EAS decoder must be located at the remote control location and directly monitor the signals of the two assigned EAS sources.

If direct monitoring of the assigned EAS sources is not possible at the remote location, automatic operation is required.

If automatic operation is used, the remote control location may be used to override the transmission of an EAS message.

Broadcast stations and cable systems may change back and forth between automatic and manual operation.

K. ADDITIONAL CARRIER OPTIONS

Broadcast stations may additionally transmit EAS messages through other communications means than the main audio channel.

For example:

1. FM stations on subcarriers including 57 kHz using the Radio Broadcast Data System (RBDS) standard produced by the National Radio Systems Committee (NRSC)
2. Television stations may use subsidiary communications services

L. EQUIPMENT FAILURE PROCEDURE

Broadcast stations and subject cable systems must determine the cause of any failure to receive the required tests or activations. Appropriate entries must be made in the broadcast station log or cable system record indicating reasons why any tests were not received.

In the event of equipment failure, a broadcast station or subject cable system may operate without the equipment, pending its repair or replacement, for a period not in excess of 60 days without further FCC authority, with appropriate entries in the broadcast station log, or subject cable system records, showing the date and time the equipment was removed and restored to service.

For personnel training purposes, the required monthly test script must still be transmitted even through the equipment for generating the EAS message codes, attention signal and EOM code is not functioning.

M. NATIONAL OPERATION PROCEDURE

The EAN is issued by the White House to:

1. Participating radio and television networks
2. Cable networks and program suppliers
3. Wire services
4. Communications common carriers

It is then disseminated via:

1. Radio and television broadcast networks to all affiliates with the use of internal alerting facilities.
2. Cable networks and program suppliers to cable systems and subscribers.
3. Wire services to all subscribers (AM, FM,TV,LPTV and other stations).
4. Off-air monitoring of EAS sources.

N. UPON RECEIPT OF AN EAN MESSAGE

1. Monitor the radio and television networks, cable networks and program suppliers, and wire services for further instructions.
2. Verify the authenticity of the EAN message with the current Red Envelope Authenticator List (broadcast stations only).
3. Monitor the two EAS sources assigned in the State or Local Area Plan.
4. Discontinue normal programming and follow the transmission procedures in the EAS Operating Handbook.
 - a) Non-participating National (NN) sources make the sign-off announcement and remove their carriers from the air and monitor for the Emergency Action termination message.
 - b) NN sources using automatic interrupt must transmit the header codes, attention signal, sign-off announcement and EOM code.
5. Transmit a common emergency message until receipt of the Emergency Action Termination Message.
6. TV broadcast stations shall display an appropriate EAS slide and then transmit all EAS announcements visually and aurally.
7. Stations in the International Broadcast Service must cease broadcasting immediately upon receipt of an Emergency Action Notification and must maintain radio silence until an EAT is issued.

O. STATE OPERATION PROCEDURE

EAN dissemination arrangements at these levels originate from State and local governments in accordance with State and local area plans.

1. The EAS may be activated at the state or local area levels by broadcast stations and cable systems at their discretion for day-to-day emergency situations posing a threat to life and property.
2. EAS operations must be conducted as specified in State and local area plans.
3. State Relay (SR) sources monitor the State Relay Network or follow the State EAS Plan for instructions from the State Primary (SP) source.
4. Local Primary (LP) sources monitor the Local Area SR sources to follow the State EAS Plan for instructions.
5. Participating National (PN) and Non-participating National (NN) sources monitor the Local Area LP sources for instructions.
6. Broadcast stations and cable systems participating in the State or Local Area EAS must discontinue normal programming and follow the procedures in the State and Local Area Plans.
7. Upon completion of the State and Local Area EAS transmission procedures, resume normal programming until receipt of the cue from the SR or LP sources in your Local Area. Then broadcast the common emergency message. Resume normal programming at the conclusion of the emergency message.

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