

EMERGENCY ALERTS

USER'S GUIDE



In a disaster, there's never too many ways to receive a life-saving alert. That's why Sonoma County will use **multiple ways** to reach you in an emergency. Here's how we can reach you, and what you must do to receive the messages.



WIRELESS
EMERGENCY
ALERTS

Wireless Emergency Alerts - WEA

In the event of an immediate threat to life and property, Sonoma County will send a WEA to your compatible mobile device, in addition to a SoCoAlert and Nixle.

- WEA's go to all compatible devices, however a WEA will only arrive on your phone if you have not disabled alert notifications.
- The WEA system is not 100% effective. Your cell phone may not receive the alert based on geography or on what cell towers are activated. This information is proprietary to cell providers, so Emergency Managers won't know if they've reached you.
- A WEA message is short – currently limited to 90 characters. You will not receive detailed information from a WEA, only notification that an emergency is occurring in your area.

The SoCoAlert logo features a red antenna icon with three curved lines above it, positioned above the text 'SoCoALERT' in a blue and red font.

SoCoAlert

Emergency Managers use SoCoAlert to call you when there is an immediate threat to life and property, based on the address you listed when you signed up.

SoCoAlerts will always include a phone call, and you can also receive text messages and emails.

- SoCoAlerts only go to landlines and subscribers.
- Sonoma County and all cities in the county have the capability of sending a SoCoAlert.
- To ensure you receive a call, subscribe at: www.SoCoAlert.com.

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EAS – Emergency Alert System

In the event of an immediate threat to life and property, Sonoma County may activate the Emergency Alert System (EAS). EAS sends emergency messages over local television and radio.

- If your television or radio are not on, you will not receive the alert.



Nixle

The Sonoma County Sheriff and other local law enforcement and public agencies send Nixles using text messages and emails.

- Nixles include emergency alerts, and messages on a variety of topics depending on your settings.
- You must subscribe here <http://local.nixle.com/sonoma-county-sheriffs-office/>

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Which is the best method for receiving alerts?

A: All methods have advantages and disadvantages. County emergency officials recommend using all systems for the best chance of receiving an alert.

Q: I am hard of hearing. How will I get notified?

A: Sign up at SoCoAlert.com. SoCoAlert can send messages via Telecommunications Device for the Deaf. If you are hard of hearing, or have any disability that makes notification more difficult, please contact your neighbors or caregiver before a disaster and ask them to contact you in the event of an alert. SoCoAlert can be used to notify friends, families and neighbors in addition to your residence.

Q: There is a major fire in Lake County, but I didn't get an alert. Why?

A: You will receive alerts if there is a threat to your life or property. We may issue advisories on Nixle of a non-emergency nature.

Q: What types of WEA alerts will I receive?

- A:**
- Extreme weather, and other threatening emergencies in your area
 - AMBER Alerts
 - Presidential Alerts during a national emergency

Q: What does a WEA message look like?

A: WEA will look like a text message. The WEA message will show the type and time of the alert, any action you should take, and the agency issuing the alert. The message will be no more than 90 characters.

Q: How will I know the difference between WEA and a regular text message?

A: WEA messages include a special tone and vibration, both repeated twice.

Q: Will I receive a WEA message if I'm visiting an area where I don't live, or outside the area where my phone is registered?

A: Yes, if you have a WEA-capable phone and your wireless carrier participates in the program. (More than 100 carriers, including all the largest carriers, do.)

Learn more: SoCoEmergency.org

