

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Commercial Mobile Alert System (CMAS)**

**PULLMAN** – The Commercial Mobile Alert System (CMAS) is the system interface to the Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) service that wireless carriers are rolling out across the nation in 2012. CMAS is a partnership between FEMA, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and wireless carriers, to enhance public safety.

CMAS allows public safety authorities to send geographically targeted, text-like Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs) to the public. WEAs will relay Presidential, AMBER, and Imminent Threat alerts to mobile phones using cell broadcast technology that will not get backlogged during times of emergency when wireless voice and data services are highly congested. CMAS/WEA complements the existing Emergency Alert System (EAS) which sends warnings to television and radio via broadcast, cable, satellite, and landline communications pathways. The public should check with their cellular carriers to see if WEA alerts are available in their area.

WEAs will look like a text message, and will automatically appear on the mobile device screen showing the type and time of alert along with any action that should be taken. The message will be no more than 90 characters, and will have a unique tone and vibration, indicating a WEA has been received. If an alert is received, citizens should follow the instructions and seek additional information from radio, television, NOAA Weather Radio, and other official sources for emergency information. Citizens should only call 911 in a life threatening situation.

Only authorized federal, state, local, tribal or territorial officials can send WEA alerts to the public. As with all new cellular services, it will take time for upgrades in infrastructure, coverage, and handset technology to allow WEA alerts to reach all cellular customers. Additional information about CMAS is available on FEMA's website at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).

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