



# Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS)

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# What is an IPAWS alert?

- IPAWS is a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) mass notification tool
  - Similar to an Amber alert
  - Signature sound
- English and Spanish message available
- Alerts are incident specific and sent to phones within a mapped-out area



Image courtesy of FEMA

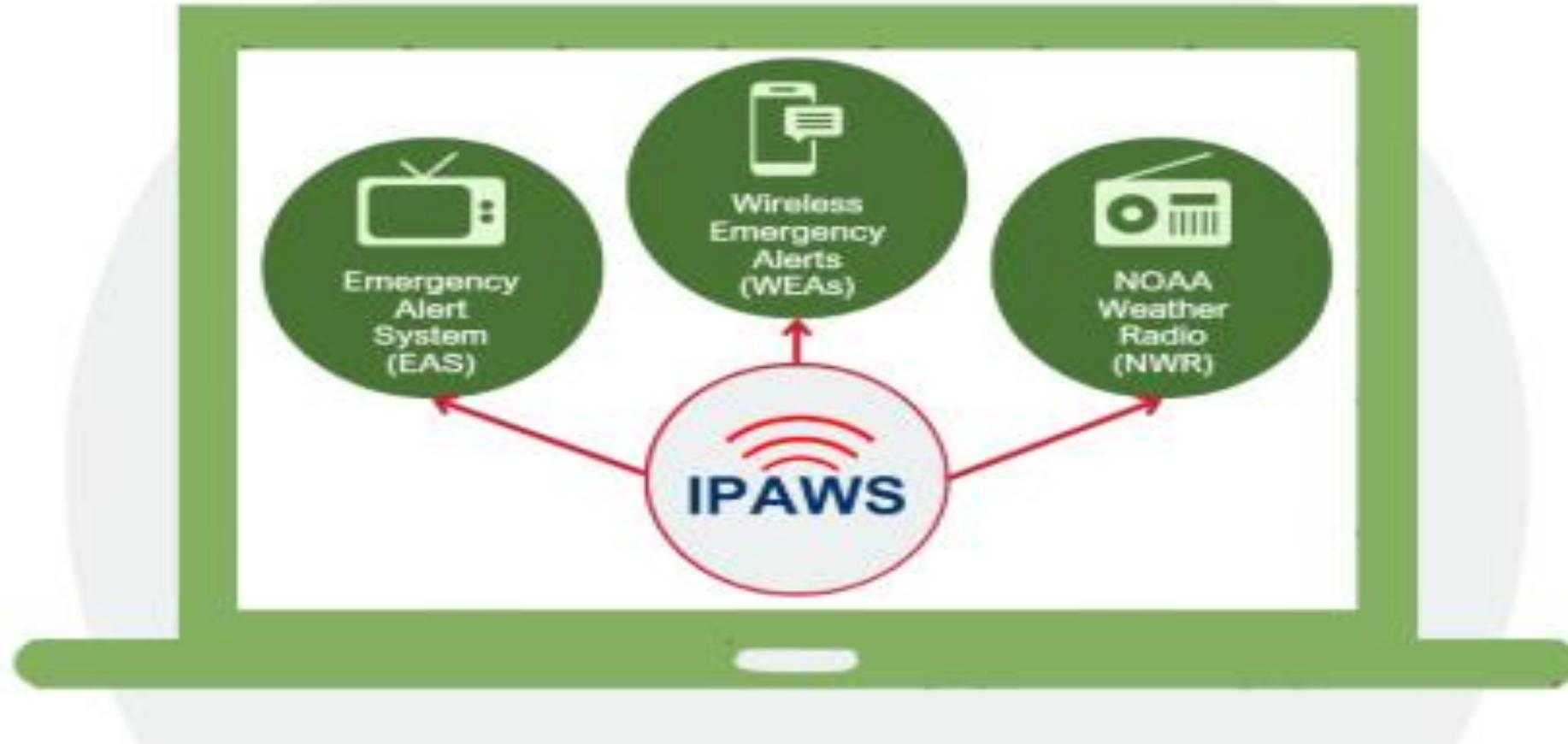


# Definitions/Functionality

- Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) – Short emergency messages that alerting authorities can send to any WEA mobile device in a targeted area. This alert is commonly used by Emergency Management Agencies across NC.
- Emergency Alerting System (EAS) – National public warning system that allows alerting authorities to present messaging during an emergency across local television and radio stations.



# IPAWS



# IPAWS Agreements / Usage

- Buncombe County Emergency Services holds agreements with NC Emergency Management and FEMA for system and messaging capabilities
  - Approved incident types for Emergency Messaging
    - Blue Alerts (Officer injury/wanted suspect)
    - Civil Danger Warning
    - Civil Emergency Messaging
    - Earthquake Warning
    - Evacuation
    - Fire Warning
    - Hazardous Materials
    - Local Area Emergency
    - Law Enforcement Warning
    - Nuclear Power Plant Warning
    - Radiological Hazard Warning
    - Shelter In-Place Warning
    - 911 Telephone Outage Emergency
    - Volcano Warning



# IPAWS Alert Process

- Emergency Management is notified of a request for an IPAWS message
- Confirm that the incident meets the criteria of an “imminent threat to life and safety due to manmade or natural disasters”
- Craft and send message using Emergency Messaging Templates
- Automatic notification to the following County Departments:
  - County Manager’s Office
  - Emergency Services
  - Communication and Public Engagement (CAPE)
  - Public Safety Communications (911)
- County Management and CAPE will begin sending out a broader message as needed



# Next Steps

- Ongoing community outreach and education will happen throughout the year to keep residents informed of additional updates
- September - ***National Preparedness Month***
  - Intensive preparedness campaign to bring awareness to specific actions that our community can take now to be Buncombe Ready
  - Intentional education around IPAWS tool
- BC Alerts will remain active as a its mass notification tool (in addition to website, social media, and coordination with local media outlets)



# Questions

