

# City of Calistoga

## COMMUNITY ALERT PROTOCOL

### Policy Authorization

Effective Date April 20, 2009  
Revision Dates (1) June 18, 2009 (2) \_\_\_\_\_  
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#### **PURPOSE:**

The City of Calistoga may need to quickly disseminate information in the event of a disaster or other imminent public safety threat. A protocol for alerting the public to matters of local importance has been established. The protocol identifies the general criteria used to determine if the information to be disseminated requires the use of a "community alert" and the procedure for carrying out such an alert.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

The timely distribution of critical public safety information is essential to protecting and safeguarding the public. For example, news of imminent flooding or severe weather can help residents or merchants prepare for the event and take appropriate actions. Other information of local importance may include significant police actions (i.e., armed suspects, serial crimes), or major road closures.

#### **PROCEDURE:**

The City has access to several systems to quickly put the word out for community alerts.

### ***CRITICAL/LIFE THREATENING INFORMATION***

***A.M.B.E.R. ALERT:*** America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response. An A.M.B.E.R. Alert is used following specific criteria for a missing and believed to be kidnapped child. An A.M.B.E.R. Alert is initiated by the shift supervisor through the County Communications Department.

***W.A.R.N.:*** Wide Area Rapid Notification. In an emergency the W.A.R.N. system is used to call telephone numbers with a recorded message that will explain the type of emergency and the response that is under way. The recording will instruct the listener on what to do or where to get more information, such as a hotline or website. A W.A.R.N. broadcast is initiated by the shift supervisor through dispatch.

***NIXLE:*** Nixle is a secure internet communications platform to provide for the timely distribution of critical public safety information to the public. This service is free and allows users to receive up to the minute information from the City via cell phones and e mail alerts, advisories, community events and traffic information. A user can subscribe to this service at the website [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com). A Nixle alert is initiated by the shift supervisor through dispatch.

***E-NOTIFY:*** E-Notify is an innovative approach providing an e-mail notification of activities involving public safety, crime, traffic or special events in the city. It is a powerful tool for residents and others to stay informed about city activities in their neighborhood. E-notify carries the added benefit of having a "viral" impact due to the ease of forwarding e mail. E-mail on mobile phones is making e-mail increasingly more effective for communication. An E-notify release will be prepared and published on the City website by the shift supervisor.

In addition to posting the information on the city website the information can also be broadcast on the local access channel 28 and placed in the public bulletin boards around the city.

***MEDIA:*** Press releases to the local newspapers and radio (Weekly Calistogan, Calistoga Tribune, Napa Register, Santa Rosa Press Democrat and radio (KVYN) can serve a valid public safety need. The media can be used to notify the public of important safety information. In the event of such a notification a supervisor shall prepare a press release for local newspapers.