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Sally Ellertson  
Public Information Officer  
141 West Renfro  
Burleson, Texas 76028-4261  
817-426-9622  
F: 817-426-9390  
[sellertson@burlesontx.com](mailto:sellertson@burlesontx.com)  
[www.burlesontx.com](http://www.burlesontx.com)

Starting the week of June 18, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will pave the way for public safety warnings to be sent via the Commercial Mobile Alert System (CMAS), also known as the Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA). The new alerts are not sent by the City of Burleson, which has used the Blackboard Connect emergency phone notification since 2008. Blackboard Connect makes automated phone calls and sends emails and text messages to landlines as well as cell phones of those who opt to add that mobile phone feature. Both system alerts are free to the public.

The CMAS warnings cover alerts issued by the president, alerts involving imminent threats to safety or life, and Amber Alerts (missing children). The carriers may allow subscribers to block everything but the alerts issued by the President.

The Wireless Emergency Alerts, which appear like text messages, will be used for tsunami, tornado, flash flood, hurricane and typhoon, extreme wind, blizzard and ice storm, and dust storm warnings. The CMAS allows authorized national, state or local government officials to send alerts regarding public safety emergencies. The emergency alerts target specific geographic areas through cell towers, which pushes the information to dedicated receivers in CMAS-enabled mobile devices. If you are visiting Burleson but you live in New York, you will receive the alert for Burleson because the WEA alerts are geographically targeted.

Customers of participating carriers will be signed up automatically for the alerts that begin next week. Participating carriers include AT&T, Bluegrass Cellular, Cellcom, Sprint Nextel, T-Mobile, U.S. Cellular, and Verizon Wireless.

CMAS is the result of a public/private partnership among the Federal Communications Commission, FEMA and the wireless industry. For more information, go to the National Weather Service website at [http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/notification/pns12critical\\_warnings.htm](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/notification/pns12critical_warnings.htm).