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How will you know if a tornado warning or severe thunderstorm warning has been issued for Burleson? The City of Burleson, in partnership with Everbridge, will contact you using Everbridge's industry-leading interactive communication and mass notification system.

The City has been using mass emergency notification since 2008. In February 2014, Burleson switched to Everbridge, which is best known recently for its role in communicating with the public during the Boston Marathon terror attack on April 15, 2013. With Everbridge, the City can not only contact residences and businesses within minutes of or in advance of an emergency but Everbridge also assists staff with managing critical activities. In addition to weather emergencies, residences and businesses can be contacted, based on their geographical location, in the event of a boil water alert, water main break, and mosquito spray, to name a few.

"We have a commitment to protect our citizens from any danger that threatens our community," Burleson Fire Chief/Emergency Management Coordinator Gary Wisdom said. "The ability to reach all residents quickly during an emergency to not only warn them but also to provide guidance is critical. Early warnings help save lives and property."

If your name and landline phone numbers are currently listed in the white pages or yellow pages or you previously signed up for the City's Blackboard Connect system, you are automatically in the Everbridge system. With Everbridge, you control how you receive messages. Messages can be sent by cell phone, landline, email, text message, fax, pager, and more, but you must register that information by opting in to the Everbridge emergency notification system.

To sign up, click on the "Emergency Notifications" tab in the center column of the homepage on the City website, www.burlesontx.com. Click on "sign up" at the bottom of the page. Everbridge will ask for a username and password, your first and last name, a security question, and a registration email. Once you have signed up, you create your profile.

Choose how you want to be contacted (text, email, phone call), the number of phones and email addresses you want included, and the order in which you want to be contacted (text first, then phone call, email). Your profile includes locations,

so you can include your home address, work address, your child's school and/or daycare, or your parents/grandparents' home. The Everbridge system focuses on the person, not the device used to alert you, so you will be asked to confirm that you received the alert. Once you confirm, Everbridge will stop contacting you for that incident.

If you have special needs, there is a place to indicate that as well so first responders will be aware of the issues. Special needs include hearing, vision, speech and mobility impairment; oxygen required; refrigerated medications; service animal required; and language interpreter required.

Through your profile, you can set a "quiet time" for messages so that you are not disturbed at night, or if you work nights, so you are not contacted during the day. Everbridge will primarily be used for weather-related emergencies (severe thunderstorm warnings and tornado warnings). Tornado warnings are sent to everyone in the system, regardless of the time.

When you sign in and set up your profile, you will be asked what your business is and what resources your business has in case of an emergency. If you are an adult care or health care facility, school/childcare facility, a fuel facility, or store chemicals or other hazardous materials on site, first responders need to know.

When you opt in to the Everbridge emergency notification system, you will be asked if you will volunteer in time of a disaster. The City is looking for those who are medical professionals, CERT trained, an EMT, fluent in another language, a disaster service worker, counseling/mental health counselor, and those who can operate heavy equipment or have heavy equipment.

If you opt in, it will be up to you to keep your profile current. You can always opt out by logging in to your profile and selecting "delete my profile."

If you have any questions about the new system or need assistance, please call Fire Station #1 at 817-426-9170.