

RAVE Alert

Community Outreach: Best Practices Guide

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Introduction

Rave Alert is an important tool for keeping your staff, residents and travelers aware of emergencies and we appreciate your assistance in spreading the word to all citizens. In this guide you will find an overview of Rave Alert, how it can benefit citizens in your community, and how you can assist in getting the word out.

Background on Rave Alert

What is Rave Alert?

Rave Alert is a powerful, proven emergency notification system which combines high performance emergency mass notification with comprehensive data management and a managed user registration portal. Rave Alert enables residents and travelers to sign up for free to receive timely and actionable emergency alerts via email, text or voice message on their cell phones. They can also identify when and how they are alerted and communicated with; before, during, and after emergencies. In addition to emergency alerts, you can also choose to receive customizable community notifications. These include notifications about severe weather, safety, health, utility disruptions, major traffic incidents, and more.

How does Rave Alert Work?

When an emergency occurs that meets the criteria for sending out an alert to the public, your administration and emergency dispatchers will gather the necessary information and push out an alert to the affected area. Alerts can be sent out city-wide to everyone who has opted-in to the system or to a specific area or neighborhood for more localized events.

Community Outreach

Communicate with your internal staff

Before your public launch, ensure your internal staff is aware of your new Alert system and have signed up. Internal education is a great way to test messaging and the registration process.

Below is an internal message template to send to your staff:

Alerts: Have you signed up to receive emergency alerts??

<insert your organization here> is proud to support Alerts powered by (Smart911 or your organization) in our community to keep you better informed of potentially hazardous situations.

Alerts powered by (Smart911 or insert your alert system name) is the [insert your location]'s official emergency alert and notification system. This system is used to send alerts to the public during emergencies.

Press Launch

Issue a press release and host a press conference about your Alert system that encourages residents to sign up for free. Highlight the benefits of signing up and make it clear how the alerts will be used and how often they will be sent.

- You will receive a press release template that you can customize and edit to reach your community's needs.
- Finalize a Launch date
- Send the finalized press release to local news cycles
- Invite town officials and representatives to speak at your press conference and notify your local media stations

Add information to your website, upcoming newsletters or email blasts

Included with this guide is a toolkit of promotional materials and FAQs. Use the FAQs and Alerts web badge that best fits into your website and link to the sign up URL. If you are using a customized URL and landing page we suggest creating your own marketing materials to reflect your Alert branding. You can also include the information below on your site.

Text for citizen facing communications:

When emergencies happen, be the first to know. The [insert your location] uses Alerts powered by [Smart911 or insert your alert system name] to send official, real-time alerts to the public with information about potentially life-saving actions they may need to take to keep themselves and their families safe. By signing up for Alerts powered by [Smart911 or insert your alert system name], you are taking a large step toward improving your personal safety.

Include information on your social media accounts

Social media is a quick and easy way to get the word out. Sample text is below.

[Town] residents can now be better informed during an emergency with Alerts powered by (insert your alert system name or Smart911)! Officials are encouraging all citizens to sign up to receive emergency notifications today.

Be Smart About Safety. The better informed you are the better prepared. Take 2 minutes to sign up for emergency alerts (insert URL)

Look for opportunities at upcoming events/meetings

Do you host meetings or events where local public safety officials could attend to educate participants on Alert? This could include:

- A meeting of your staff or advisory board on how best to promote the service to your community
- A meeting of your members where an allotted time can be used to present on Alerts
- An event where vendors or other agencies will be able to interact with participants and develop community partnerships

Get the word out before, during, and after a storm

If a storm is approaching your area, leverage your communication channels and the media to encourage residents to sign up to receive alerts.

- Issue a media alert or press release to generate news coverage
- Post information to your website and social media channels

- Don't neglect to promote your alert solution after the storm when preparedness is top of mind

The key to successfully driving alert registrations in your community is to communicate about the system often and make it easy for residents to find the information and sign up.

If you have any questions, feedback or success stories please reach out to us at community@smart911.com