



MASS NOTIFICATION SYSTEM POLICY

I. PURPOSE

To establish guidelines and procedures for providing information to the public utilizing the Mass Notification System known as Sangamon Alert Messaging (SAM).

II. POLICY

The Mass Notification Tool is a communications tool supplementing other methods of notification to the public and should be used sparingly in order to ensure the public does not get desensitized to the messages due to overuse. The County reserves the right to revoke any sub account for failure to adhere to these basic guidelines. A Sub account is defined as: any account that falls under the Sangamon County Mass Notification Tool license. Sub accounts will be issued, in writing, after approval of the Sangamon County Board or its designee.

III. RULES AND REGULATIONS

A. Only those authorized by Sangamon County via a signed letter issuing a “Sub Account” may use the Emergency Mass Notification System for an emergency incident or general notifications. Those authorized are:

- a. Government body Administrator/Designee
- b. Chief of Police/Designee
- c. Fire Chief/Designee
- d. Emergency Dispatch Personnel
- e. County Department Heads
- f. Other entities as approved by the County Board or Designee

1. The SAM System will be used for emergency notifications. Examples of when authorized user might use the system to notify residents and businesses are:

- a. Security Alerts
- b. Hazardous Weather Conditions
- c. Evacuation Notice & Route
- d. Criminal Activity
- e. Missing/Lost Person
- f. Fire Emergencies
- g. Chemical Spill or Gas Leak
- h. Utility Outage
- i. Road Closure
- j. Floods
- k. Water Main Breaks
- l. Drinking Water Contamination

2. The Mass Notification System may be used for non-emergency notifications. Examples of when authorized users might use the Mass Notification System to notify residents and businesses are:

- a. Government body meeting dates
- b. Government body events
- c. Road construction
- d. Water outages/boil alerts

3. The Mass Notification System will not be used for notification of private or non-government body run events, or for political purposes.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Those authorized by Sangamon County to send a Mass Notification message may do so at their discretion but must follow the below guidelines:

1. Prior to launching a message, the sender shall take every precaution necessary to ensure the message is not a duplicate message (e.g. if a message has already been sent from the County Level to “all County residents).
2. When sending a message the sender must begin the message by identifying who is sending the message. (e.g. “This is the “name” Police Department with an important message.”)
3. All messages should be clear, concise, and to the point. If possible a return number should be included if there are questions.
4. If an emergency message needs to be sent immediately and the department wanting to send the message is unable to, they may notify the dispatch center and provide the information needed

and dispatch will make the notification. Only those who are on the “authorized user” list will be able to request a message be sent by dispatch personnel.

5. All messages will be visible and monitored by the County.

V. CONCLUSION

1. The Policy/Guidelines listed above are not all inclusive, meaning, those issued authorization to send messages may make more detailed/stringent guidelines but may not reduce/remove any guidelines listed in this policy. The intent is to utilize this system to keep the citizens of Sangamon County well informed of emergencies without overusing the system in a way that could cause citizens to block incoming messages.