E-1

DATE SUBMITTED 01-15-09

SUBMITTED BY City Manager

DATE ACTION REQUIRED 01-21-09

COUNCIL ACTION (x)
PUBLIC HEARING REQUIRED ( )
RESOLUTION ( )
RDINANCE 1ST READING ( )
ORDINANCE 2ND READING ( )
CITY CLERK'S INITIALS ( )

IMPERIAL CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA ITEM

SUBJECT: PRESENTATION/APPROVAL OF THE MASS NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS – REVERSE 911

1. ACCEPT THE MASS NOTIFICATION MOU.
2. ACCEPT THE MASS NOTIFICATION POLICY GUIDE.

BACKGROUND/SUMMARY:

FISCAL IMPACT:

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION: MANAGER'S INITIALS _____

MOTION:

SECONDED:
AYES:
NAYES:
ABSENT:

APPROVED ( ) REJECTED ( )
DISAPPROVED ( ) DEFERRED ( )

REFERRED TO:

IMPERIAL COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AGENCY
797 Main St. Suite A, El Centro, CA 92243
(760) 482-2974
Fax (760) 336-3903
E-mail: ryankelley@co.imperial.ca.us

Bruce Haynes, M.D.
EMS Medical Director

Ryan Kelley, B.S.
EMS Manager

January 7, 2008

Mayor and City Council Members of Imperial
420 South Imperial Avenue
Imperial, California 92251

Re: Mass Notification Systems

Honorable Members:

The County of Imperial has determined that Reverse 911 should be made available to all interested agencies within our community to send messages for emergency notification. Therefore, we present the Mass Notification System Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and Policy Guide for system use by all agencies participating in Reverse 911 use.

Each agency assumes the training responsibility and notification list updates specific to their jurisdiction. In addition, local municipalities are limited to notifications within their service areas, and special service districts will have list based application only. If the mass call feature is used, the initiating agency is responsible for the costs associated with remote calling into Imperial County.

During the first two years, a cost sharing program and system administration home will be resolved for continued mass notification service to Imperial County residents. A cost sharing program must be in place by September 5, 2010.

I request the following actions:

a. Accept the Mass Notification Memorandum of Agreement for local agencies.
b. Accept the Mass Notification Policy Guide.

Sincerely,

Ryan Kelley, Manager
Emergency Medical Services Agency

Reverse 911

Imperial County

Ryan Kelley, Emergency Medical Services Manager

MASS NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

RECENT HISTORY

- During the 2007 Wildfires, the City of San Diego and the County of San Diego both employed emergency notification applications to assist in the safe evacuation of over 515,000 residents.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- December 14, 2007
  - Mass notification system presentation in CEO's Conference Room.
    - Attended by Supervisors Leimgruber and Grogan
  - Public Health/EMS Agency tasked with identifying vendors and comparing the capabilities.
- December 28, 2007
  - Governor Schwarzenegger announced $2 million from California homeland security funds for emergency notification systems.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- February 11, 2008
  - Vendor comparison provided to Imperial Valley Emergency Communications Authority (IVECA).
  - CEO directs Public Health/EMS Agency to form internal group of Imperial County Departments.
- February 27, 2008
  - Mass Communication Committee established.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- March 31, 2008
  - Mass Notification Committee selects Reverse 911 as preferred vendor.
  - Office of Emergency Services submits Telephone Emergency Notification System (TENS) Grant.
- June 6, 2008
  - The Governor's Office of Homeland Security awards Imperial County $206,171.00 to establish mass notification system within 90 days.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- August 20, 2008
  - Reverse 911 installs servers at Planning Department and Administrative Building.
  - Mass Communication Committee successfully tests system prior to grant deadline.

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

- October 9, 2008
  - Reverse 911 reports 99% geo-coding between physical address mapping and telecom information.
- October 15, 2008
  - Website registry establish for public media release.
  - Launch date finalized for November 4, 2008.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- November 4, 2008
  - Imperial County Board of Supervisors Presentation.
  - Mass Notification System launch with media event.
  - On-line registry linked to Imperial County Website.
- November 6-10, 2008
  - Imperial County wide test of Reverse 911.
    - 30 second message in English and Spanish.
    - Calls occured between business hours

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

REVERSE 911

Logout Contact U

Welcome impa
Imper

Home Sessions Data/Maps Inbound Options Event Tracker Guardian Calling Mobilization Plus™ Reports System

Reverse 911® Interactive Community Notification System

Message Maintenance

Message Type	Mobilization	Message Description	BOS presentation test
Message Recorded	YES	Length	18 Seconds
Message Text	This is a test message to let you know that REVERSE 911 is now working in Imperial County. You do not need to respond to this message. For more information visit www.imperialvalleyreverse911.com Este es un mensaje para avisarle que el sistema de REVERSE 911 ya está		
Recording Phone	7604822974	Used In Session	Unused
Owner	impadmin	Last Modified	10/30/2008 04:26 PM

Play | Record | Text To Speech | Refresh

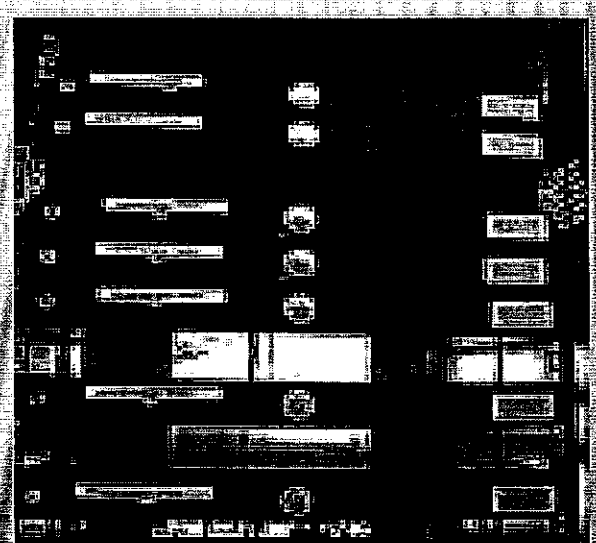
Save | Delete | Save & Return | Cancel

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- November 13, 2008
  - Golden Guardian 08 Exercise
    - Notification of Emergency Operations Center Staff at the beginning of exercise.

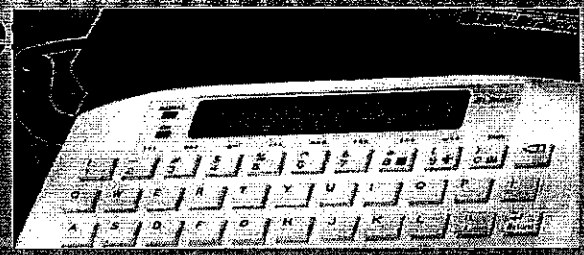
REVERSE 911

- System Description
  - Two mirrored servers with 48 phone lines.



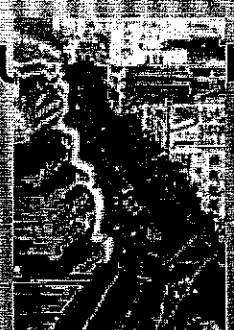
REVERSE 911

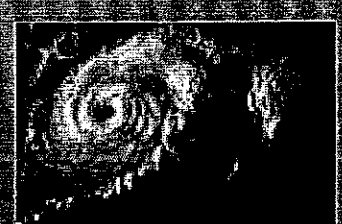
- System Features
  - Provides the ability to send hundreds of calls in a short amount of time.
  - Provides cellular phone, voice over internet and e-mail messages to citizens who provide contact information.
  - Provides voicemail messages and the ability to generate TTY/TDD message



REVERSE 911

- System Use
  - Emergency notifications (fire, earthquake)
  - Public Safety (lost child, bomb threats, manhunts)
  - Public Health (boil water order, qu[illegible] ne[illegible] quality)
  - Utility disruption
  - Emergency employee notification





REVERSE 911

- Message Content
  - Initial alert message to include:
    - Person generating the message
    - Description of hazard
    - Location of hazard
    - Protective actions
    - Time available to act
  - Essential Emergency Information:
    - Follow up messages aired on broadcasts and the Emergency Alert System

REVERSE 911

- System Management
  - Mass Notification System Policy Guide
    - Imperial County Board of Supervisors prescribe the membership from select county departments.
    - Meets quarterly to review system use, operations and training.
    - Imperial County Board of Supervisors shall appoint a system administrator to serve as MNC Chairperson.

REVERSE 911

- System Partners
  - Mass Notification System Memorandum of Agreement
    - Local agencies or cities may enter into agreement with Imperial County to access Reverse 911.
    - Authorized to send messages within their jurisdictions.
    - Each agency responsible for their system use.
    - No cost to partner agencies during the grant period.
    - Cost sharing program to be begin development by September 2009.

MASS NOTIFICATION COMMITTEE

- Purchasing Department
  - Ted Turner
  - Debbie Wray
- Assessor's Office
  - Laura Cervantes
- Information Technology
  - Susan Moler
  - David Crockett
  - Ramon Rodriquez
  - Victor Acevedo
- Imperial County Fire Department
  - Tony Rouhotas
  - Rosa Hernandez
- Imperial County Public Health Department
  - John Pritting
  - Maria Peinado
- Imperial County Planning Department
  - Jurg Heuberger
  - Darrel Gardner
- Imperial County Sheriff's Office
  - Rick Mackin
  - Anna King
- Imperial County Chief Executive Officer
  - Ralph Cordova

Imperial County

Mass Notification System

Policy

I. Purpose

To establish a policy on the use and administration of Imperial County's Mass Notification System. This policy describes roles and responsibilities governing system management and use.

II. System Description

A Mass Notification System provides the ability to send hundreds of calls in a short amount of time, retry unanswered calls, and track information and feedback from the calls. Residents and businesses are easily identifiable through the database provided in both list and map formats.

A Mass Notification System also provides the ability to send fax, text, and e-mail messages to citizens who provided contact information. The system provides voicemail messages and can generate reports on delivery method and status reports. The system also offers the ability to generate a TTY/TDD message.

Typical uses for a Mass Notification System include:

1) Transmitting messages regarding emergencies (earthquake, fire, hurricane, etc).
2) Transmitting messages regarding Public Safety (lost child, bomb threats, manhunts, etc).
3) Transmitting messages regarding Public Health (boil water order, quarantine, air quality, etc).
4) Transmitting messages regarding Utility disruption.
5) Contacting department or agency employees in an emergency.

A Mass Notification System is only one component of Imperial County's public warning system. and should be used in conjunction with the other components (e.g. Emergency Alert System) as deemed fit by local authorities.

Imperial County selected the Plant CML "Reverse 911" System ® as the Mass Notification System for implementation in Imperial County. The County will make the Mass Notification System available to other local agencies and cities within the County upon entering into an agreement with the County for said use.

III. System Features

The Mass Notification System operates on a 48-port, dual server. Redundant servers will be housed at the Imperial County Administrative Building and at the County Planning Department.

System users may access the network by means of internet and phone. The system capabilities depend upon the length of a call. A 20 second message utilizing 48 lines allows 5000 calls to be made in approximately one hour. Should greater calling capacity be required in the event of a major disaster involving mass notification, the mass call feature may be utilized. Mass call is based upon a 13 second message and can make approximately 4800 calls per minute or 288,000 calls per hour.

IV. System Management & Oversight

Mass Notification Committee: The Imperial County Board of Supervisors shall prescribe the membership from select County departments to serve as the Imperial County Mass Notification Committee (MNC). The MNC shall meet at least quarterly to review system use, operations and training. The MNC shall act in an advisory capacity and shall submit its observations and recommendations to the Board of Supervisors.

System Administrator: The Board of Supervisors shall also appoint a System Administrator who shall also serve as the MNC committee chairperson. The System Administrator will be responsible for system oversight to include the following:

- Setting up or delegating the responsibility for setting up user accounts on the system for County Departments. User accounts include login and passwords that allow an individual access to the system.
- Authorizing representatives from each approved agency and city to set up their own user accounts.
- Addressing system use and operational issues and convening the MNC as needed to discuss problems and make recommendations to the Board of Supervisors
- Generating system reports for review at quarterly MNC meetings
- Implementing a program to ensure all new users receive adequate training and support to properly access and utilize the Mass Notification System. Train-the-Trainer sessions will be conducted as needed to ensure all departments, agencies and cities have staff capable of conducting in-house training for their personnel.
- The MNC System Administrator is responsible for ensuring compliance with the provisions of the County contract with Plant CML. If use of the system by an individual violates the contract provisions or the Imperial County Mass Notification Committee approved policies and protocols, the System Administrator reserves the right to disable that individual's login after pursuing reasonable attempts to resolve the issue and upon notice to the County department, agency or city and the Mass Notification Committee. If misuse of the system constitutes an immediate risk to the public health and/or safety, the

System Administrator may immediately disable access to the system, followed by notice to the department, agency or city and the Imperial County Mass Notification Committee.

V. System Use

Any authorized user may access and transmit a message over the Mass Notification System as follows:

Countywide/Mass Notifications: only approved County Departments are authorized to use the system to send countywide mass notifications to all citizens within the County.

Local/Jurisdictional Notifications: other than countywide/mass notifications, all other local or jurisdictional notifications will be the responsibility of the appropriate County department, local agency or city authorized to access the Mass Notification System. If an emergency affecting a local agency or city has the potential to affect other jurisdictions within the county, the local agency or city should first send out a jurisdictional notification and then notify the MNC System Administrator or other appropriate County department to send out a countywide mass notification. (Example: the City of Brawley should first send out an alert throughout its jurisdiction of a hazardous material spill in the City of Brawley and then notify the MNC System Administrator or County Fire Department who will notify other affected jurisdictions or send out a mass notification).

Each entity (County department, local agency or city) approved to access the Mass Notification System will provide login and passwords as well as training to key individuals within their organization that will be authorized to send out local or mass notifications. These entities are also authorized to develop pre-established notification lists, employee call-back lists and pre-recorded messages to meet their needs. It is the responsibility of each entity to create, maintain and update these lists and messages.

VI. Message Content

The alert/notification message is one of the most important elements of the Mass Notification System. The content and style of the notification message has a direct impact on the public's response to a warning and the willingness to comply with the recommended protective actions. A well written warning message that is delivered consistently across all modes of dissemination will provide as much assurance as possible that members of the public will react appropriately. The maximum length of an outgoing message should be no longer than one minute.

The warning message should be written in a style that clearly conveys the potential danger to the public. An effective warning message must be specific, clear, consistent, and accurate. The content of the message should include information on five basic elements. These are;

1. *The source of the message.* The person or persons responsible for generating the alert should be clearly identified. The message should identify the individuals by

name, identify their positions, and state the names of their organizations or offices.

2. *Description of the hazard or risk.* The warning message must describe the event that has occurred (or may occur) and the danger that it poses. The hazard should be described in sufficient detail so that all members of the public can understand the character of the threat from which they are to protect themselves.
3. *Location of the hazard.* The message should also describe the geographic areas that are at risk. The details of the location should be described in terms easily understood by the public using well known landmarks and geographic boundaries. Simply stating distances from the source of the threat is not adequate.
4. *Guidance for protective actions.* The message must include information on what people should do to protect themselves. People will act properly when clear, detailed guidance is provided. Therefore, the proper protective actions must be described explicitly.
5. *Time available to act.* Public warnings must also address the "when" aspect of response. The warning message must include information on the time available for those in the affected area to take the appropriate protective action.

Note: In many cases, it will be impossible to convey all of the necessary information within the one-minute time constraint. Therefore, it is recommended that emergency information and instructions be provided to the public in two parts: (1) the initial alert message and (2) essential emergency information and instructions provided to the local media to be aired as follow-up messages and special news broadcasts using the Emergency Alert System.

VII. SystemTesting

Mass Notification System testing will be conducted at approximately 12:00 pm on the first Wednesday of every month. System activations and response will also be incorporated into annual disaster training and exercises.

IMPERIAL COUNTY

Office of County Counsel
Inter-Office Memorandum

DATE: October 22, 2008

TO: John Pritting, Deputy Director, Health Dept.

FROM: Thomas V. Barrington, Deputy County Counsel

SUBJECT: **Mass Notification System**

Attached is a slightly revised MOU regarding the system. The major change is to require the program participants to meet before October of 2009 to develop a cost sharing plan and to require that plan to be submitted to the Board of Supervisors for approval before March 1, 2010. I am also forwarding an electronic copy of the revised MOU.

The Policy is approved as to form.

COUNTY OF IMPERIAL
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

ROBIN HODGKIN, M.P.A.
Director

STEPHEN W. MUNDAY, M.D., M.P.H., M.S.
Health Officer

HEALTH SERVICES DIVISION

JOHN PRITTING, M.B.A.
Deputy Director

MEMO

TO: Kaye Veliquette, Administrative Assistant

FROM: John Pritting, Deputy Director

DATE: September 2, 2008

SUBJECT: Mass Notification System MOA & Policy

Attached is a draft Mass Notification System MOA and Policy for review by County Counsel. Please ask County Counsel to recommend additional language and the appropriate means of notification regarding a disclaimer in which the County and approved entities would be held harmless in the event of system failure. The language under Section IV: Defense and Indemnity only addresses indemnity between the County and the approved entity. However, the County and participating agencies and cities also need immunity in the event of a situation in which residents do not receive an alert, or a timely alert, and suffer loss or damages. There are various reasons that could prevent an alert from being sent or received that are beyond the County's control. I'm not sure that this disclaimer should be included in the MOA but instead should be made known to all residents who wish to receive notifications through this system. Perhaps this language should be posted to the website that residents will access to enroll in the program. Please ask County Counsel to advise.

Thank you.

John

935 Broadway • El Centro • CA • 92243-2349 (760) 482-4847 • (760) 352-9933 Fax

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT BETWEEN

THE COUNTY OF IMPERIAL

AND THE

(AGENCY NAME OR CITY OF _____)

I. PURPOSE

This agreement is made by and between the County of Imperial, herein after referred to as COUNTY and the (Agency name or City of _____), herein after referred to as AGENCY/CITY . The County of Imperial has implemented a Mass Notification System (MNS) designed to be a local and countywide asset, available to all approved local agencies and cities within the County to notify employees and residents in times of emergencies within the framework, agreement, policies and protocols of the Imperial County Mass Notification Committee (MNC).

II. RECOGNITION

In addition to the need of County Departments to provide emergency notices and information to citizens throughout the county, the Imperial County Mass Notification Committee recognizes that each local agency or city within the county may also need to provide emergency notices and/or information to their members or residents during an emergency. The MNC is authorized by the Imperial County Board of Supervisors to make the system available at little or no cost to other agencies and cities within the County of Imperial until March 1, 2010. After March 1, 2010 the costs will be shared among the parties pursuant to a cost sharing agreement.

Use of this system on or about September 5, 2008 is authorized for the following purposes:

1. Imminent or perceived threat of life or property
2. Disaster notifications
3. Evacuation notices
4. Public Health Emergencies
5. Any notification to provide emergency information to a defined community

The system is not authorized for:

1. Routine, informational or educational messages
2. Any message of commercial nature
3. Any message of political nature
4. Any non-official business (e.g. articles, retirement announcements, etc.)

III. RESPONSIBLITIES

A. Countywide Mass Notifications

Only approved County Departments are authorized to use the system to send countywide mass notifications to all citizens within the County of Imperial.

B. Local or Jurisdictional Notifications

Other than countywide mass notifications, all other local or jurisdictional notifications will be the responsibility of the appropriate County department, local agency or city authorized to access the MNS. If a local emergency affecting a local agency or city has the potential to affect other jurisdictions within the county, the local agency or city should first send out a notification throughout its jurisdiction and then notify the MNC System Administrator or other appropriate County Department to send out a countywide mass notification. (Example: the City of Brawley should first send out an alert throughout its jurisdiction of a hazardous material spill in the City of Brawley and then notify the MNC System Administrator or County Fire Department who will notify other affected jurisdictions or send out a countywide mass notification).

C. (Agency name or City of_____) Responsibilities

(Agency name or City of_____) will designate a representative who will serve as liaison with the MNC System Administrator and will be responsible for providing login and passwords, as well as training, to key individuals within their organization who will be authorized to send out local or jurisdictional notifications utilizing the MNS. The liaison shall provide 24-hour contact information to System Administrator.

(Agency name or City of _____) is authorized to develop pre-established notification lists, employee call-back lists and pre-recorded messages to meet its needs. It is the responsibility of the (Agency name or City of_____) to create, maintain and update these lists and messages.

IV. COSTS

The County of Imperial agrees to fund the initial license fees, initial customization, and ongoing annual maintenance fees of the system for the first two years utilizing the Homeland Security Grant Program (HSGP) Telephone Emergency Notification System (TENS) grant funding. The funding includes the purchase of monthly updates of telephone data for the first two years. Additionally, the County agrees to house the system hardware at two separate locations within the county.

On or before October 1, 2009, County and (agency or city) shall meet with all other participants to establish a cost sharing plan which equitably allocates the expenses of operation and maintenance of the MNS among the parties participating in the system. Said cost sharing plan shall be established and submitted to the Board of Supervisors for approval prior to March 1, 2010.

Any unexpected or extraordinary costs not covered by the HSGP during the initial two year grant implementation period may be distributed under the cost sharing plan described above.

During the life of the contract there may be additional costs that exceed the County's anticipated cost for the system due to significant emergencies and increased usage. Should this occur, this issue will be brought to the Mass Notification Committee for recommendation of how these costs would be shared and funded. Recommendations will be presented to the Board of Supervisors for resolution.

V. GOVERNANCE

The County will manage the MNS as a countywide asset under the policies and protocols approved by the Imperial County Mass Notification Committee. The (Agency name or City of _____) agrees to follow these policies and protocols.

Use of the system by the (Agency name or City of _____) is contingent upon their abiding by this agreement with the mass notification vendor contract, a copy of which will be provided by the County to the (Agency name or City of _____), along with a copy of the policies and protocols established by the Imperial County Mass Notification Committee.

The MNS utilizes the Emergency 9-1-1 database to complete the notifications. The use of the 9-1-1 database is regulated by the California Public Utilities Code (CPUC) sections 2872 and 2891.1. The information contained in the 9-1-1 database is confidential and proprietary and shall not be disclosed or utilized except by authorized personnel for the purpose of emergency notifications.

The MNC System Administrator is responsible for ensuring compliance with the provisions of the County contract with the vendor. If use of the system by an individual representing the (Agency name or City of _____) violates the contract provisions or the Imperial County Mass Notification Committee approved policies and protocols, the MNC System Administrator reserves the right to disable that individual's login after pursuing reasonable attempts to resolve the issue and upon notice to the (Agency name or City of _____) and the Imperial County Mass Notification Committee. If misuse of the system constitutes an immediate risk to the public health and/or safety, the MNC System

Administrator may immediately disable access to the system, followed by notice to the agency and the Imperial County Mass Notification Committee.

VI. DEFENSE AND INDEMNITY

A. Claims Arising From Sole Acts or Omissions of County

The County of Imperial hereby agrees to defend and indemnify the (Agency name or City of _____), its agents, officers, and employees (hereinafter collectively referred to in this paragraph as Agency or City), from any claim, action or proceeding against (Agency or City), arising solely out of the acts or omissions of County in the performance of this Agreement. At its sole discretion, (Agency or City) may participate at its own expense in the defense of any claim, action or proceeding, but such participation shall not relieve County of any obligation imposed by this Agreement. (Agency or City) shall notify County promptly of any claim, action or proceeding and cooperate fully in the defense.

B. Claims Arising From Sole Acts or Omissions of Agency or City

The (Agency or City) hereby agrees to defend and indemnify the County of Imperial, its agents, officers and employees (hereafter collectively referred to in this paragraph as 'County') from any claim, action or proceeding against County, arising solely out of acts or omissions of (Agency or City) in the performance of this Agreement. At its sole discretion, County may participate at its own expense in the defense of any such claim, action or proceeding, but such participation shall not relieve (Agency or City) of any obligation imposed by this Agreement. County shall notify (Agency or City) promptly of any claim, action or proceeding and cooperate fully in the defense.

C. Claims Arising From Concurrent Acts or Omissions

County hereby agrees to defend itself, and (Agency or City) hereby agrees to defend itself, from any claim, action or proceeding arising out of the concurrent acts or omissions of County and (Agency or City). In such cases, County and (Agency or City) agree to retain their own legal counsel, bear their own defense costs, and waive their right to seek reimbursement of such costs, except as provided in paragraph E below.

D. Joint Defense

Notwithstanding paragraph C above, in cases where County and (Agency or City) agree in writing to a joint defense, County and (Agency or City) may appoint joint defense counsel to defend the claim, action or proceeding arising out of the concurrent acts or omissions of (Agency or City) and County. Joint defense counsel shall be selected by mutual agreement of County and (Agency or City). County and (Agency or City) agree to share the costs of such joint defense and any agreed settlement in equal amounts, except as provided in paragraph E below.

County and (Agency or City) further agree that neither party may bind the other to a settlement agreement without the written consent of both County and (Agency or City).

E. Reimbursement and/or Reallocation

Where a trial verdict or arbitration award allocates or determines the comparative fault of the parties, County and (Agency or City) may seek reimbursement and/or reallocation of defense costs, settlement payments, judgments and awards, consistent with such comparative fault.

VII. TERMINATION

This agreement may be terminated upon mutual consent at any time. Additionally, either party may terminate this agreement following 6 months notice to the other party.

VIII. SIGNATURES

_____	_____
Xxxxxxxx	(Agency or City of_____)
County of Imperial	

Imperial County

Mass Notification System

Policy

I. Purpose

To establish a policy on the use and administration of Imperial County's Mass Notification System. This policy describes roles and responsibilities governing system management and use.

II. System Description

A Mass Notification System provides the ability to send hundreds of calls in a short amount of time, retry unanswered calls, and track information and feedback from the calls. Residents and businesses are easily identifiable through the database provided in both list and map formats.

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Any authorized user may access and transmit a message over the Mass Notification System as follows:

Countywide/Mass Notifications: only approved County Departments are authorized to use the system to send countywide mass notifications to all citizens within the County.

Local/Jurisdictional Notifications: other than countywide/mass notifications, all other local or jurisdictional notifications will be the responsibility of the appropriate County department, local agency or city authorized to access the Mass Notification System. If an emergency affecting a local agency or city has the potential to affect other jurisdictions within the county, the local agency or city should first send out a jurisdictional notification and then notify the MNC System Administrator or other appropriate County department to send out a countywide mass notification. (Example: the City of Brawley should first send out an alert throughout its jurisdiction of a hazardous material spill in the City of Brawley and then notify the MNC System Administrator or County Fire Department who will notify other affected jurisdictions or send out a mass notification).

Each entity (County department, local agency or city) approved to access the Mass Notification System will provide login and passwords as well as training to key individuals within their organization that will be authorized to send out local or mass notifications. These entities are also authorized to develop pre-established notification lists, employee call-back lists and pre-recorded messages to meet their needs. It is the responsibility of each entity to create, maintain and update these lists and messages.

VI. Message Content

The alert/notification message is one of the most important elements of the Mass Notification System. The content and style of the notification message has a direct impact on the public's response to a warning and the willingness to comply with the recommended protective actions. A well written warning message that is delivered consistently across all modes of dissemination will provide as much assurance as possible that members of the public will react appropriately. The maximum length of an outgoing message should be no longer than one minute.

The warning message should be written in a style that clearly conveys the potential danger to the public. An effective warning message must be specific, clear, consistent, and accurate. The content of the message should include information on five basic elements. These are;

1. *The source of the message.* The person or persons responsible for generating the alert should be clearly identified. The message should identify the individuals by

name, identify their positions, and state the names of their organizations or offices.

2. *Description of the hazard or risk.* The warning message must describe the event that has occurred (or may occur) and the danger that it poses. The hazard should be described in sufficient detail so that all members of the public can understand the character of the threat from which they are to protect themselves.
3. *Location of the hazard.* The message should also describe the geographic areas that are at risk. The details of the location should be described in terms easily understood by the public using well known landmarks and geographic boundaries. Simply stating distances from the source of the threat is not adequate.
4. *Guidance for protective actions.* The message must include information on what people should do to protect themselves. People will act properly when clear, detailed guidance is provided. Therefore, the proper protective actions must be described explicitly.
5. *Time available to act.* Public warnings must also address the "when" aspect of response. The warning message must include information on the time available for those in the affected area to take the appropriate protective action.

Note: In many cases, it will be impossible to convey all of the necessary information within the one-minute time constraint. Therefore, it is recommended that emergency information and instructions be provided to the public in two parts: (1) the initial alert message and (2) essential emergency information and instructions provided to the local media to be aired as follow-up messages and special news broadcasts using the Emergency Alert System.

VII. SystemTesting

Mass Notification System testing will be conducted at approximately 12:00 pm on the first Wednesday of every month. System activations and response will also be incorporated into annual disaster training and exercises.