

The Community Warning System

A partnership of industry,
government and the media
to warn and inform
our community
in the event of an emergency

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Contra Costa County
Office of the Sheriff



History of the CWS:

- A partnership of County departments, community organizations, industry and the media
- Constructed by the non-profit organization CAER
- Donated to the County in 2001
- Transferred to the Sheriff in 2003
- Funding from hazardous materials fees (no taxpayer money!)

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So what should I know?

1. How will I receive alerts?
2. What will the CWS tell me?
3. When will alerts be sent? When won't alerts be sent?
4. Who sends the alert?

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Community Warning System Tools



The Warning:

- **Alert** people at risk about imminent hazards to their life or health.
- **Inform** people about the basics of an incident, and then direct them to more detailed information.
- **Reassure** people that they have the information they need to protect themselves and to help each other.

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When is the CWS Used?



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Who Activates It?

1. Automatically from refineries / chemical plants

- On Health Services' authority for HAZMAT incidents

2. By CWS Duty Officer for all other incidents:

- On behalf of jurisdictions, special districts in Contra Costa County
 - Law enforcement activity
 - Fire
 - Flood
 - Neighborhood hazmat
 - Missing or at-risk person



What's that sound ?



- 42 sirens throughout the industrial corridor
- Sirens tested at 11:00 a.m on first Wednesday of each month.
- A test siren will be 2 “cycles” for about 90 seconds total
- An actual warning will be 8 cycles for about 3 minutes total
- Audible up to ***about*** one mile away

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What do I do About it?

SHELTER

- Get yourselves, family, friends and co-workers to a place of immediate safety
- Bring pets inside if possible
- Health Dept officials have determined indoors is much safer than outdoors in case of a Hazmat release.

SHUT

- Close and LOCK all doors & windows
- Turn off ventilation systems such as heating & air-conditioning units, vent fans

LISTEN

- Turn on your television and radio for further information and instructions
- Avoid using the telephone unless reporting a life-threatening emergency; the CWS may be trying to call you

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All Clear

- “All Clear” means it’s safe in your neighborhood

(Sometimes an incident is over but there are lingering effects in the area, downwind, etc.)

- The media and industry CAN’T tell you when it’s all clear
- Wait for the word from the responsible health, law or fire officials
- Then open up your house, return home, and go back to normal activities

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***BEFORE* an emergency:**

- Sign up at: ***<http://www.cococws.us>***
 - Cell phone – Voice & Text alerts
 - Email alerts
- Like us on Facebook & Follow us on Twitter
- Bookmark website to see a map of alerts
- Buy a weather radio



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Questions?

Emergency Services Division
50 Glacier Drive
Martinez, California 94553
(925) 313-9622

Heather Tiernan, CWS Manager
htier@so.cccounty.us

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