

WILSON COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN COMMUNICATION/NOTIFICATION AND WARNING ESF-2

I. PURPOSE

This section describes the County's emergency communication/notification and warning system.

II. SITUATION AND ASSUMPTIONS

A. Situation

1. Wilson County operates a Central Communications Center located at a secure facility. Wilson County Emergency Communications Center serves as the 911 Center and the County warning point.
2. Day to day operations require five dispatch positions, however, the volume of traffic during times of emergency/disaster may require additional personnel to assist.
3. The Communications Center is designed as a secure facility.
4. The Communications Center is usually the first point of contact for the general public in contacting emergency service agencies.
5. Wilson County emergency communications are heavily dependent on the commercial telephone network.
6. The Wilson County EOC is equipped with remote radios to allow emergency services agencies to communicate with their field units. Amateur radio capabilities are unlimited and consist of quickly deployable communication equipment and vehicles equipped for communications support.
7. Special needs groups, persons in group quarters, or schools may require special warning and/or notification.
8. Emergency Management has the capability to access the Emergency Alert System to deliver warnings to the public.
9. Scanner radios are utilized extensively by residents of the County, providing another means of alerting or warning the public.

B. Assumptions

1. Use of all available forms of warning and notification will not provide sufficient warning to the general public and special needs population.
2. Emergency/disaster occurrences could have a detrimental effect on the County's communication system.
3. The commercial telephone system serving Wilson County is vulnerable to the effects of emergencies and disasters, and to possible system overload due to increased usage.

4. Commercial electric power may be shut off during significant emergencies, necessitating the use of auxiliary power.
5. It is possible for communities within the County to be isolated from communications for extended periods of time.
6. Loss of the communication tower or the County's law enforcement, fire, or EMS base stations could hamper communication, or the ability to page emergency personnel throughout the County.
7. The ability to repair damage to the County communication system is contingent upon the availability of private commercial repair technicians.
8. State assistance may be needed to procure supplemental communications equipment or to locate available repair technicians following a major disaster.

III. CONCEPT OF OPERATION

A. General

1. The County Warning Point will initiate notification and warning of appropriate personnel. Telephone, radio, communications, or pagers may be utilized to notify public officials, EOC staff, emergency personnel, and others as required.
2. Emergency service vehicles equipped with public address systems may be used to warn the general public.
3. The National Weather Service may issue weather watches or warnings directly to the public and the Communications Center.
4. The Communications Center is operated 24 hours a day and serves as the Wilson County Warning Point.
5. The NC Highway Patrol's Raleigh Communications Center serves as the State Warning Point.
6. Notification of governmental officials and emergency personnel by the County Warning Point will follow established procedures.
7. Emergency communications standard operating guidelines will be implemented. Back-up capabilities will be activated as necessary.
8. The County Manager or Emergency Management Director must authorize the use of the Emergency Alert System/Emergency Notification System
9. Emergency warning may originate at the national, state, or local level of government. Timely warning requires dissemination to the public by all available means:
 - a. Local Radio and Television Stations
 - b. NOAA Weather Radio (National Weather Service)
 - c. Sirens, Horns, Mobile PA Systems

- d. Telephone
 - e. General Broadcast Over All Available Radio Frequencies
 - f. Newspapers
 - g. Emergency Notification System
10. Field emergency service personnel utilize the County emergency communications networks to communicate with the EOC.
 11. Amateur Radio volunteers can augment primary communications. The NCEM Central Branch office will operate an amateur radio station during periods of activation.
 12. The Central Branch Office will assist the National Weather Service with dissemination of severe weather advisories and forwarding of related information, situation reports, etc., as needed by the County.

B. Specific

1. Telephone Service
 - a. Embarq Telephone provides commercial telephone service.
 - b. Mobile telephone capability is provided by several companies in the area.
 - c. Embarq Telephone will be furnished a restoration priority list for telephone service prior to and/or following a major disaster.
 - d. During emergencies, personnel will staff information telephones in the EOC to respond to questions from the general public.
2. Two Way Radio Systems
 - a. The County's Communications System is designated as the principal system to be used for direction and control activities. Principle users are as follows:
 1. Law Enforcement
 2. Emergency Management
 3. Fire / Rescue
 4. Emergency Medical Service
 5. Public Utilities
 6. Medical Facilities
 - b. Other two-way communications systems which may be used to communicate with the State EOC during emergencies include:
 1. Division of Criminal Information (DCI)
 2. State Emergency Management Radio Network
 3. NAWAS (National Warning System)
 4. FAX
 5. Amateur Radio Emergency Service
3. The Emergency Communications Center Director will be responsible for maintaining the operational readiness of the Primary and Back-up Communication Centers.

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