EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM (EAS)

PROCEDURES FOR

TEXAS EAS DISTRICT NUMBER 1 (AMARILLO REGION)

INCLUDES THE FOLLOWING COUNTIES

Armstrong	Hansford	Oldham
Carson	Hartley	Potter
Collingsworth	Hemphill	Randall
Dallam	Hutchinson	Roberts
Deaf Smith	Lipscomb	Sherman
Donley	Moore	Wheeler
Gray	Ochiltree	

I.   INTRODUCTION

A.   This plan was prepared by the Amarillo EAS Region Emergency Communications Committee and the broadcast and cable media. It is used to disseminate emergency information and warning to the general public in the Amarillo EAS Region or any portion thereof within the broadcast coverage and cable system service areas at the request of designated local, State and Federal officials. This Amarillo EAS Region plan may be activated on a day-to-day basis in response to emergencies such as: power outages, tornadoes, floods, civil disorders, Pantex plant accidents, toxic leaks or any occurrence which poses a danger to life or property.

B.   Acceptance of/or participation in this plan shall not be deemed as a relinquishment of program control, and shall not be deemed exercising independent discretion and responsibility in any given situation. Broadcast stations and cable systems originating emergency communications shall be deemed to have conferred rebroadcast authority. The concept of management of each broadcast station and cable system to information and instructions to the general public is provided by the FCC Rules and the Texas State Emergency Alert System Plan.

II.   AUTHORITY

A.   Title 47 U.S.C. 151, 154 (i) & (o), 303 0, 524(g) & 606; and 47 C.F.R. Part 1 1, FCC Rules & Regulations, Emergency Alert System.

B.   Texas Emergency Alert System Plan, November 15, 1996

III. KEY EAS SOURCES

A.   LP's One & Two: One - KGNC AM/Two - KGNC FM
     Location: Amarillo, TX
     EAS Monitoring Assignments: NOAA-Amarillo, KVOP-Plainview, TSN
     Contact: Bob Russell
     Telephone: 806-355-9801 (answered 24 hours)
     Hours of Operation: 24 Hours

IV.   AUTHENTICATION (See ANNEX B)

A.   Code Words - See Appendix A for use of code words. The Code Word will be used by the designated official of a city or county when requesting Amarillo EAS Region activation.

B.   Return Phone Calls - The Local Primary stations or other broadcasters receiving a call directly from a designated official for EAS activation may return the phone call to appropriate number (listed in Annex A) for verification.

C.   National Weather Service (NWS) warnings received via NOAA Weather Radio, NOAA Weather Wire or AP, Reuters and UPI wire do not need authentication.

V. IMPLEMENTATION

A.   Procedures for Designated Officials

1.   Request activation of EAS through the National Weather Service Office in Amarillo or KGNC-AM/FM. Contact by phone or by fax or other previously arranged alternative method. Only officials listed on activation lists as explained in Annex A are authorized to request activation of EAS. Note: When "severe weather" warnings are issued by the NWS, KGNC AM & FM will be monitoring NWS. Do not request EAS activation for severe weather warnings through the LP's

unless your community is under imminent threat and the NWS has not broadcast the warning. **Requests for weather warning EAS activation, by local officials, should be made directly to the NWS Amarillo Office.**

2.   Designated officials use the following format when contacting the key EAS source: "This is (Name/Title) of (Organization). I request that the Emergency Alert System be activated for the Amarillo Region because of (Description of emergency)." Use Authentication as noted in paragraph IV above.

3.   Upon authentication, designated officials and EAS source personnel determine transmission details (i.e., live or recorded, immediate or delayed). Officials should provide emergency program material including a description of the emergency, actions being taken by local government, and instructions to the public. EAS message originators shall limit their messages to two minutes, maximum recording time of EAS equipment.

4.   Keep line of communication open if necessary. Additional and clarifying information should be included in public information messages which are aired following the initial EAS message through other than EAS activation. EAS messages should be succinct.

5.   For a unique emergency not involving the entire EAS Local Area, authorities may request EAS activation through the cable system and broadcast station serving only the affected area.

6.   All counties and cities in the Amarillo Region are encouraged to develop an EAS relationship with all broadcasters within their county or city. Each jurisdiction may request EAS activation from only those broadcasters directly serving your community. You may acquire an EAS encoder/decoder to relay your emergency message by phone or by radio to your local stations. You may develop guidelines that are less stringent than paragraph V.B. below. For Amarillo Region EAS activations follow the guidelines in V.B.

B.   Guidelines for Local EAS Activation

1.   The Amarillo Region EAS Plan will work if our LP's and broadcasters have the upmost confidence in all officials who may request local EAS activation. To maintain the highest confidence of our broadcast community, follow these guidelines.

   a.   Severity - will aid in reducing loss of life or reducing substantial property damage.

   b.   Timing - requires immediate public knowledge to avoid adverse impact.

   c.   Other means of disseminating information are inadequate to ensure rapid delivery.

2.   Remember, you may ask for Amarillo EAS Region activation even if the major emergency is occurring only within your jurisdictional boundaries if the threat is imminent and will impact a significant area within your jurisdiction. A rule of thumb, if you can reach all areas, that will or may be impacted by the threat, with public safety vehicles using sirens and loud speakers within 15 minutes or before the hazard arrives, whichever comes first, then do not request Amarillo Region EAS activation.

3.   A WORD OF CAUTION: Emergency Management Agencies have acquired a valuable new tool in gaining access to all area broadcasters and cable operators via the EAS. However, if not used prudently, you put yourself in danger of losing this tool. Broadcasters and cable operators are expecting the EAS to be used only for life-threatening emergencies. Keep in mind two things.

   a.   Some broadcasters and cable operators may have their EAS Decoders set to the Automatic Mode. There is no one there to screen your message and decide if it should be aired. They are depending on you to only send an EAS Alert for a very serious emergency. The first time you trigger the system for a frivolous event, you will lose the confidence of your area broadcasters and cable operators.

b.   Broadcasters and cable operators decide to participate in the local-level EAS on a voluntary basis. No one can force them to carry your EAS Alerts. Plans will need to be worked out with cooperating broadcast stations and cable operators to secure their agreement to program their equipment to automatically or on a delayed basis interrupt programming with local emergency messages.

C.   Procedures for Broadcast and Cable System Personnel

1.   Upon receipt of a request to activate Amarillo Region EAS from appropriate authority (verify authenticity via method described in IV above), the LP's may proceed as follows:

a.   Broadcast the following announcement: "WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM BECAUSE OF A LOCAL EMERGENCY. IMPORTANT INFORMATION WILL FOLLOW."

b.   Transmit the EAS header codes and Attention Signal.

c.   Transmit the following announcement and material:

"WE INTERRUPT THIS PROGRAM TO ACTIVATE THE EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM FOR THE AMARILLO REGION BECAUSE OF A LOCAL EMERGENCY. IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS WILL FOLLOW."

*** Follow with emergency program ***

d.   To terminate the EAS message (immediately or later), make the following announcement:

"THIS CONCLUDES EAS PROGRAMMING. ALL BROADCAST STATIONS AND CABLE SYSTEMS MAY NOW RESUME NORMAL OPERATIONS."

e.   Transmit the EAS End Of Messages (EOM) code.

Important Note: For State and local emergencies, broadcasters and cable operators have the option of transmitting only the EAS header and EOM codes without the Attention Signal and emergency message. This is acceptable so that EAS coded messages can be quickly relayed though areas unaffected by the emergency.

2.   All other broadcast stations and cable systems are monitoring key sources via EAS equipment and will be alerted by the header codes

and attention signal. Each station and cable system upon receipt of the signal will, at the discretion of management, perform the same procedures as in step 1 above by transmitting the emergency message from the LP. Broadcast stations and cable systems using automatic interrupt of programming should receive the EOM codes before retransmitting State or local level EAS messages. This will prevent downstream locations from missing parts of the EAS message.

3.   Upon completion of the above transmission procedures, resume normal programming. Appropriate notations should be made in the station and cable system records. A very brief summary may be sent to the FCC for information purposes only.

4.   Cable systems shall be responsible, on a date to be specified by the Federal Communications Commission, for inserting emergency messages as video crawls into the programming offered to their subscribers except for the channels retransmitting signals of local broadcast stations that meet the following requirements:

    a.   Originate local news programs at the studio facility.

    b.   Have weather equipment at the studio facility to support the stations' weather department to determine severe local weather conditions.

    c.   Have the ability to run video crawls over network or local programming to advise the public of weather conditions or other public emergencies.

    d.   The stations' master control center is manned at all times when the stations is on the air.

    e.   The station general manager will certify the above conditions to the individual cable system that re-transmits their signal to exempt the station from cable system equipment placing video crawls over the broadcast station's programs.

D.   Procedures for the Amarillo Office of the National Weather Service

1.   All weather related events will be broadcast on National Weather Service Radio (NWR) following NWS procedures.

2.   Requests from local government officials for Civil Emergency Messages or Weather Warnings will be broadcast on NWR or the NOAA Weather Wire Services following local NWS procedures.

3.   All requests for EAS activation, Civil Emergency Messages or Weather Warnings, if criteria is met, will be broadcast to all counties in the Amarillo EAS Region as follows:

a.   NWR primary coverage area (Armstrong, Carson, Hutchinson, Moore, Oldham, Potter, Randall). Use NWR SAME code and 1050-Hz tone alert.

b.   All other counties in the Amarillo EAS Region - provide NWR SAME code and broadcast only once--but not provide the 1050-Hz alert.

VI. TESTS

Amarillo/Potter/Randall Department of Emergency Management Staff will be requesting a test of the Local EAS plan on a quarterly basis for the Amarillo Region. KGNC-FM and KGNC-AM will be contacted for the Amarillo Region EAS test on alternating quarters. KGNC-AM will be contacted for the test on the last Friday of January and July. KGNC-FM will be contacted on the last Friday of April and October. All other jurisdictions may test with stations in or near their jurisdiction as determined by a mutual arrangement. These jurisdictions may call the National Weather Service office or KGNC FM & AM to simulate a call to insure they have the proper number. If a simulation call is made also test the passwords.

VII. ANNEXES

ANNEX A: Code Word Procedures.
ANNEX B: Approvals
ANNEX C: List of EAS codes transmitted by key EAS sources.
ANNEX D: List of broadcast stations and cable systems.

ANNEX A

County Judges, Mayors, and Emergency Managers in the 20 county EAS District 1 can request Amarillo Region EAS activations.   Designated officials must send a letter to the Amarillo Emergency Management Coordinator, P.O. Box 1971, Amarillo, Tx 79186 with the following information:

> Jurisdiction
> Name of Authorized Individual
> Individuals last four digits of Social Security Number
> Desired Code Word

The Amarillo Emergency Management Office will provide current information to the National Weather Service and KGNC Radio. A copy of the updated information will be returned to the sender as notification of action completed.

When requesting activation the designated official will state which jurisdiction he/she represents, name, last four digits of social security number, and code word. The NWS or Radio station rep will authenticate information and continue with request.

If an individual calls and states they are the Mayor, County Judge, or Emergency Manager and they are not on the authorization, it will be up to the handler of the call to determine whether to accept the activation or not.

ANNEX B

This Amarillo EAS Region plan was developed and approved by the Amarillo EAS Region Emergency Communications Committee as signed below. A public meeting was held on January 15, 1997 to receive input and comment on a draft plan. All broadcasters and Emergency Management Officials in the region were sent a draft plan and invited to attend. The draft plan was approved by all attendees of this meeting. Committee membership was also approved.

_____   _____
Bob Russell, Co-chair, LPS   **Date**
KGNC AM/FM

_____   _____
Walt Kelley, Co-Chair, Local   **Date**
Government Emergency Manager

_____   _____
Jose Garcia, National Weather   **Date**
Service

_____   _____
Donald H. Ford, KACV TV   **Date**

_____   _____
Troy Grider, TCA Cable   **Date**

_____   _____
Richard Edmondson, Tx DEM   **Date**
Emergency Planner

_____   _____
Brian J. Weber, KCIT TV   **Date**

ANNEX C

EAS Codes Transmitted By Key EAS Sources

ORG-ORIGINATOR CODES	EEE-EVENT NATURE OF ACTIVATION	EVENT CODES
EAN=Emergency Action Notification Network	Emergency Action Notification (National)	EAN
	Emergency Action Termination (National)	EAT
	National Information Center	NIC
	National Periodic Test	NPT
	Required Monthly Test	RMT
	Required Weekly Test	RWT
WXR=National Weather Service	Tornado Watch	TOA
	Tornado Warning	TOR
CIV=Civil Authorities	Severe Thunderstorm Watch	SVA
	Severe Thunderstorm Warning	SVR
	Severe Weather Statement	SVS
EAS=Broadcast Station or a Cable System	Special Weather Statement	SPS
	Flash Flood Watch	FFA
	Flash Flood Warning	FFW
	Flash Flood Statement	FFS
	Flood Watch	FLW
	Flood Warning	FLS
	Winter Storm Watch	WSA
	Winter Storm Warning	WSW
	Blizzard Warning	BZW
	High Wind Watch	HWA
	High Wind Warning	HWW
	Hurricane Watch	HUA
	Hurricane Warning	HUW
	Hurricane Statement	HLS
	Evacuation Immediate	EVI
	Civil Emergency Message	CEM
	Practice/Demo Warning	DMO
	Administrative Message	ADR
	Hazardous Material Incident	HMI
	Radiological Accident	RAD
	Emergency Public Information	EPI
	Ozone Alert (unhealthy)	OAA
	State EAS Statement	STS
	State Priority Activation	STA

ANNEX D

The following Broadcast Stations and Cable Systems are located in the Amarillo EAS Region:

Radio Stations

KACV-FM
Amarillo

KAEZ FM
Amarillo

KAPU FM
Amarillo

KARX FM
Amarillo

KATP FM
Amarillo

KBZD FM
Amarillo

KDDD AM/KMRE FM
Dumas

KDJW
Amarillo

KEYE AM/FM
Perryton

KGNC AM/FM
Amarillo

KGRO AM/KOMX FM
Pampa

KIXZ/KMML/KBUY
Amarillo

KJRT FM
Amarillo

KPAN AM/FM
Hereford

KPQZ
Amarillo

KPUR AM/FM
Amarillo

KPVY FM
Amarillo

KQAC FM
Amarillo

KQFX FM
Amarillo

KQIZ-AM
Amarillo

KQTY AM
Borger

KRDF FM
Spearman

KRGN FM/KLMN FM
Amarillo

KTNZ AM
Amarillo

KXIT AM/FM
Dalhart

KYFA FM
Amarillo

KWTS

Canyon

KZIP AM
Amarillo

KZRK FM/KAKS
Amarillo

Television Stations

KACV (PBS)
Amarillo

KAMR (NBC)
Amarillo

KCIT (FOX)
Amarillo

KCPN (UPN)
Amarillo

KFDA (CBS)
Amarillo

KVII (ABC)
Amarillo

Cable Services

TCA CABLE
Amarillo