



Sept. 8, 2009
PR# 09-071

TEST of the Alaska AMBER Alert System

(STATEWIDE, Alaska) – On Thursday, September 10, 2009, at approximately 10:45 in the morning, the Alaska Amber Alert will hold a full test of the Amber Alert EAS broadcasting components. **IT IS ONLY A TEST.**

The Alaska AMBER Alert Plan is a voluntary partnership between law enforcement agencies and broadcasters to activate an urgent bulletin in the most serious child-abduction cases. Since its implementation, an Alaska AMBER Alert has been fully activated once. The Anchorage Police Department activated the alert based on a false report this past March. (A press release was issued by the Department of Public Safety on March 2, 2009 regarding the activation.)

Broadcasters use the Emergency Alert System (EAS) to air a description of the abducted child and suspected abductor. This is the same concept used during severe weather emergencies. The goal of the Alaska AMBER Alert Plan is to instantly galvanize the entire state to assist in the search for and safe return of the child.

In the event of an actual AMBER Alert, the AMBER Alert website will have updated information on the incident. The website is <http://amberalert.alaska.gov/>

What: *****TEST***** of the Alaska AMBER Alert System

When: Thursday, September 10, 2009 @ approximately 10:45 a.m.

Where: The entire state of Alaska

Individuals can sign up for wireless AMBER alerts through your mobile phone provider. To sign up for email notifications when an AMBER alert is activated, go <http://amberalert.alaska.gov/>





September 8, 2009

Department of Public Safety
5700 E. Tudor Rd.
Anchorage, AK 99507

Dear Sir or Ma'am:

The Department of Public Safety, in conjunction with the Alaska Broadcasters Association and the State Emergency Coordination Center, is conducting a test of the Alaska AMBER Alert on September 10, 2009 at approximately 10:45 AM.

The Alaska AMBER Alert Plan is an early warning system used by law enforcement, in cooperation with broadcasters, to alert the public during a child abduction. The plan is designed to illicit maximum public participation in only the most serious child abduction situations to assist in the recovery of the child. It is hoped that the early warning distributed by the statewide radio and television Emergency Alert System (EAS) will coerce a kidnapper into releasing a child unharmed or speed the locating of the abducted child.

By broadcasting frequent public alerts, descriptions and other vital information in the crucial first hours after a child abduction, law enforcement hopes to enlist citizens in an effort to recover the child unharmed.

The AMBER Alert System began in 1996 when Dallas-Fort Worth broadcasters teamed with local police to develop an early warning system to help find abducted children. AMBER stands for America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response and was created as a legacy to 9-year-old Amber Hagerman, who was kidnapped while riding her bicycle in Arlington, Texas, and then brutally murdered. Alaska began its AMBER alert program in 2003 with the cooperation of the Alaska Broadcasters Association.

Sincerely,

Lt. Barry Wilson
Alaska AMBER Alert Coordinator

Alaska Amber Alert

Station Activation Procedures

Please post at your transmitter control point for use by properly trained operators and distribute to news departments and on-air personnel.

Step 1 The Alaska State Troopers/Fairbanks Dispatch Center (AST/FDC) determines that a child abduction has occurred that fits the criteria for an AMBER Alert. They are the only authorized state agency to activate an EAS AMBER Alert. Citizens cannot activate an AMBER Alert, citizens requesting activation must contact their local law enforcement agencies or the Alaska State Troopers.

Step 2 The AST/FDC activates the EAS System, using the Child Abduction Emergency “CAE” code. The message will be issued to KFQD radio in Anchorage and then rebroadcast throughout the system, as per the Alaska EAS State Plan.

Step 3 The AST/FDC then activates the AMBER Alert on the statewide AMBER Alert website at www.amberalert.alaska.gov. This immediately triggers the AMBER Alert Secondary Notification System, which sends an email to all stations and staff registered on the bulk email list. This will include:

1. Description of the child (name, race, age, physical attributes, clothing worn)
2. Where the abduction took place
3. Suspect description
4. Suspect vehicle description
5. Phone number for the public to call with information
6. Photograph of the child and suspect, if available

This information and any updates will also be posted on the AMBER Alert website.

Step 4 Station voluntarily and quickly determines if they will participate and share this information and transmit emergency type information to the public within your service area. The recommended timeframe is 15 minutes from receiving initial information to on air broadcast.

Step 5 Station shall then broadcast the information :

1. at least every 30 minutes during the first two hours of activation and then every hour for the next three hours. Hourly broadcasts will continue until the Fairbanks Dispatch Center receives notification from requesting law enforcement agency to discontinue the alerts. An EAS cancellation code will be activated and email subscribers will be notified of the cancellation.

Step 6 Station will notify listeners and viewers of the Amber Alert cancellation.

AMBER Alert Activation Criteria

- ✓ The abduction involves a child or children under 18 years of age, or someone with a known mental or physical disability; and
- ✓ Local law enforcement is reasonably certain that an abduction has occurred and the victim is believed to be in imminent danger of serious bodily harm or death;
- ✓ Enough descriptive information is available about: the victim; the suspect; and/or the suspect’s vehicle to assist with the safe recovery of the victim and/or the apprehension of the suspect; and,
- ✓ Information on the abduction has been entered into the National Crime Information Center (NCIC) and flagged as a Child Abduction (CA) or AMBER Alert (AA).
- ✓ The AMBER Alert will NOT be used for Runaway or Family Abductions unless investigation determines that the victim’s life is in immediate danger.