

# CAPCOG Emergency Notification System

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## Overview

In 2004, CAPCOG used homeland security grant funds to purchase a regional **Emergency Notification System (ENS)**.

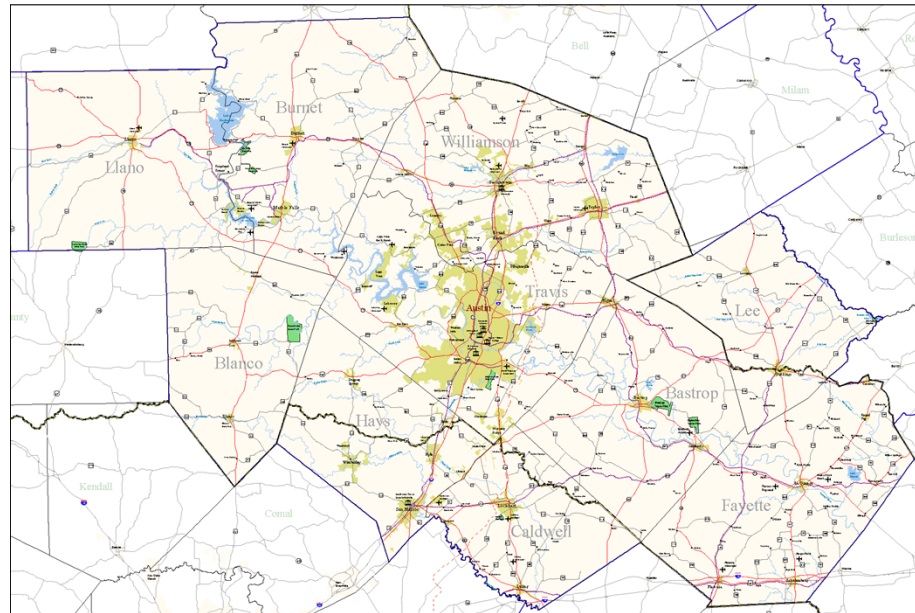
This type of system uses a "reverse dialing" telephone method to notify communities or public safety forces of critical emergency information in situations where property or human life is in danger.



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Local administration of the system is based in jurisdictions with Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) and therefore is available for use across the CAPCOG region.


Regional cost-sharing makes it possible to make this highly capable system available to even the smallest of jurisdictions.



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Participating jurisdictions have access to the two components of ENS:

-  **Communicator! NXT** • **Communicator! NXT** – A database that allows us to automatically notify staff, officials, or other set groups through phone (including cell phone), e-mail, and alpha-numeric paging. Available to all jurisdictions and other organizations that participate in homeland security activities.

-  **GeoCast Web** • **GeoCast** - A web-based application used to notify a targeted group within a specific geographic area. Available to all jurisdictions with PSAPS.



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The difference between the two systems:

- *Communicator! NXT notifies first responders*
- *GeoCast notifies the public*



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## ENS Use

Defined as and authorized *only* in an emergency situation where property or human life is in jeopardy.

With the exception of testing procedures, ENS's *sole purpose* is to provide critical notification to public safety forces or the community or both.



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## What are the Jurisdiction's Responsibilities?

- Designate a single point of contact
- Maintain an up-to-date roster of all Authorizing Individuals
- Maintain an up-to-date roster of all Certified Users
- Protect and limit the use of the assigned user name and password
- Ensure that Certified Users are available or on-call during each shift and complete annual training
- Prohibit or limit modifications of the Communicator! NXT or GeoCast Web programs without CAPCOG's prior written consent
- Request public education materials as provided by CAPCOG



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## What are the **Authorizing Individuals' Responsibilities?**

- Ensure that access to and activation of the ENS is limited to Certified Users
- Protect and limit the use of the assigned user names and passwords
- Protect the confidentiality of addressing databases and of information furnished by 9-1-1 database providers



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## What are CAPCOG's Responsibilities?

- Verify the accuracy of rosters with the ENS point of contact at least quarterly
- Conduct routine maintenance and service operations on the system
- Provide training for all Certified Users
- Provide procedural forms
- Provide technical and procedural guidance for ENS use and administration
- Provide a contact list for CAPCOG Staff



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## Successes of this approach

- Widespread availability– All counties have access
- Reliability– No downtime since February, 2009
- Used for a variety of scenarios
  - Rising flood waters
  - Flood gate operations
  - Fast-moving wild fires
  - Hazardous materials releases
  - Armed robbery suspects at large
  - SWAT standoffs
  - Boil water notices
  - Missing persons

