

Be Notified of Local Emergencies Join The Phone Alert System



What: The Phone Alert System calls your phone(s) when there is a local emergency that could impact you or your property.

Where: The Phone Alert System is for the Mark West Watershed/Alpine Valley Area.

Who: The Phone Alert System is a project of the Emergency Preparedness Committee (EPC), which is a joint effort of the Alpine Club and the Friends of the Mark West Watershed.

Why: Residents need a way to know, in real-time, of emergency events, such as wildfires, road closures, or on-going criminal activity.

When: The EPC is gathering phone numbers now and plans to have the system operational by June 1st.

How The Phone Alert System Works

The Mark West Watershed Phone Alert System is *not* meant to replace the County's Reverse 911 system (which is used mainly for evacuations) but instead provide a flexible and fast way for residents to know about local emergency events that could potentially affect their lives. Phone Alert Events could include: wildfires, earthquakes (if phones still work), road closures on main roads due to major rockslides, etc., criminal activity that appears to be on-going, and potential flooding. In addition, the emergency event must have the potential to affect multiple families.

The three EPC Key Communicators decide whether a situation warrants a Phone Alert and they activate the system (i.e. record the Phone Alert by phone and then have it sent). Road Captains or anyone in the community can contact any one of the Key Communicators about a current situation. (See back of this sheet for more information.)

Sign My Family Up For Phone Alerts!

Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Physical Address (if different): _____

Home Phone: _____

Work Phone(s), optional: _____

Cell Phone(s), strongly recommended, since an emergency event can take out landlines: _____

A Free Service (but taking donations!)

The EPC has investigated a commercially-available Phone Alert System from CallingPost.com that broadcasts the recorded message within 1 to 10 minutes of the time of recording. The System can call any phone (cell or landline) or message-recording device. Busy or unanswered phones are called 13 times. Calling hours are 6AM to Midnight. The EPC is providing this service at no cost to participants, although each 70-second call will cost the EPC 12 cents. (For a \$20 donation, you could underwrite 166 emergency calls to help protect your neighborhood!)

A Sample Phone Alert

Based on the May 16, 2008 "Tar" Fire, here's what a Phone Alert could sound like:

"This is Bill Blake of the Emergency Preparedness Committee. There is currently a fire burning in the approximate area of the intersection of Saint Helena and Tarwater roads. Emergency crews have been called. The fire appears to be burning on the north side of the road and is moving quickly up the hillside. We recommend that residents stay off Saint Helena and Tarwater roads if possible to stay out of the way of fire crews. Due to hot, dry conditions, this potentially could become a big fire. For more information, we recommend you contact your Road Captain, if possible, or your other neighbors to monitor the progress of this fire. KRSO 1350AM or KZST 100.1FM, or the PressDemocrat.com might have updated information. If you have pressing new information about the situation AND you have already called the emergency authorities with that information, then contact me at XXX-XXXX, so I can broadcast an updated phone alert if needed. Thank you!"

Email address (to receive system updates): _____

Optional Donation: any resident can sign-up for free for Phone Alerts, but the EPC does pay 12 cents per call. A \$20 donation pays for 166 emergency calls! Please make checks payable to "Alpine Club" with "Phone Alert System" in memo line and mail to:

Alpine Club, POB 4604, Santa Rosa, CA 95402-4604

Privacy Policies

The names and phone numbers collected will not be used for any purpose other than to receive alerts for Phone Alert Situations as outlined above. Names and numbers will not be sold or transferred to any other organization. (CallingPost.com's Privacy Policy is not to sell any of our information either.) In addition, participants are strongly encouraged to provide their email addresses for a separate email list serve that will only be used to keep participants informed about updates to the system, and to provide them with reminders, such as their current Road Captain's phone number. Finally, we will need your home address so we know which Road Captain is yours.

Help The Neighborhood Protect Itself Join In Emergency Preparedness



Needed: Road Captains

- 1) A Road Captain helps keep the road's list up-to-date: names of residents, addresses, and phone numbers.
- 2) A Road Captain explains the programs of the EPC to the road's residents and tries to get them to participate, e.g. provide phone numbers for the Phone Alert System.
- 3) A Road Captain is a key communication point for the road for the Phone Alert System. Specifically, the Road Captain can be the intermediary between the road residents and the EPC Key Communicators. During an emergency event, the Key Communicators will attempt to keep the Road Captains fully informed about developments so, in turn, the Road Captains can answer questions from their road's residents.
- 4) A Road Captain helps in "truthing" the Rincon Valley Fire Department maps. Communicates with RVFD about any limitations on the road, e.g. weight limits on private bridges, tree limbs that would restrict fire engines, etc.
- 5) Captains are welcome to join the EPC, but it is not required.
- 6) The EPC will arrange Road Captain Meetings twice a year to discuss EPC programs and progress. The meetings will be in the Spring and Fall, roughly before and at the end of the Fire Season, and will review "what worked" and "what needs improvement."

DISCLAIMER: Do NOT rely solely on the EPC or its PAS for information about local emergencies. The EPC and its PAS is a non-official, volunteer effort to keep residents informed. In consideration for being a PAS recipient and by providing your contact information, you and your Successors indemnify and release from liability the members, volunteers, officers, and committee participants of the EPC, the Alpine Club, and the Friends of the Mark West Watershed for any damages that might be considered has having been caused by the failure of the PAS. Failures can include, but are not limited to, phone systems, vendor systems, volunteer errors and misinformation.

Needed: Key Communicators

- 1) One person and two alternate volunteers to be the communications point for coordinating the flow of information between the emergency authorities (e.g. RVFD, CalFire, etc.) and the Road Captains. The idea is that the emergency authorities cannot handle everyone's calls during an event; if we present one Communicator, that Communicator can funnel information from the authorities to the Road Captains and, in turn, to the road residents. The information can also go in reverse: from the residents to the Road Captains to the Key Communicator to the authorities.
- 2) Ideally, the Communicators would work at home or be around a good part of the time.
- 3) The idea is to have at least one Communicator here during an emergency (while the other two Communicators might be on vacation, etc.): the two Back-Up Communicators basically have the same background information and tasks as the Key Communicator. The Key Communicator would make certain that one of the Back-Ups cover for her/him while s/he is out-of-town.
- 4) The Key Communicator (or the designated Back-Up) decides when an Event qualifies for a Phone Alert and what information needs to be sent via the Phone Alert System.
- 5) During an Event, the Key Communicators pass along more frequent updates to the Road Captains than may be appropriate for a general (full member list) Phone Alert. The Key Communicators can transfer these updates to the Road Captains via a traditional phone tree (which allows for discussion) or, if appropriate, a Road Captains Only Phone Alert, via a subset list of the Phone Alert System.

If you're interested in helping the neighborhood protect itself during a local emergency, and being either a Road Captain or Key Communicator, then please email Bill Blake at bblake@sonic.net