



CANALERT

Safety and security: a Government priority

People don't like to imagine a disaster striking their community. But tornadoes, tsunamis, forest fires, flash floods and other emergencies can happen quickly...anywhere, anytime.

Being prepared for emergencies is the best protection. As the experience of other countries has shown, alerting the public promptly of imminent danger can save lives and reduce injuries.

Canada needs to develop its ability to alert its citizens and share critical information. Most industrialized countries already have a nation-wide public alerting system.

That is why Industry Canada is working closely with experts from provincial, territorial and municipal agencies, and the broadcasting and telecommunications industry, to develop CANALERT – a Canada-wide public alerting system.

CANALERT will allow emergency management agencies to deliver brief public alerts over radio, TV, cell phones and the Internet. Alerts will include instructions and advice on where to find any new information that becomes available. CANALERT is a key part of our national emergency management system.

How CANALERT will work

- Alert messages, which will be transmitted in English and French, will take a number of formats – a banner at the bottom of TV screens, brief audio clips or text messages.
- The messages will identify:
 - the authorized government agency issuing the alert;
 - the imminent danger;
 - communities and areas affected;
 - protective actions that should be taken; and
 - where to obtain additional information.
- To ensure coordinated and consistent emergency alerts, CANALERT will have standardized procedures and protocols. These measures will also enhance interoperability among government agencies.
- Secure access, an authentication process and user protocols guard against unauthorized use and hacking.

Saving lives with
timely warnings



Who can send an emergency alert message?

- Selected, trained public officials at the federal, provincial/territorial and municipal levels will be authorized to send alert messages using CANALERT. These officials will determine when abnormal situations require prompt, co-ordinated action to issue an alert message to the public, using criteria such as:
 - the lives and safety of large groups, neighbourhoods or communities are at risk;
 - the danger to the community is imminent and widespread;
 - the impact on the community could be catastrophic;
 - the public needs to be informed of critical, life-saving information; and
 - an alert or warning must be issued in a timely manner.
- Federal and provincial agencies are working together to develop guidelines and procedures for the use and operation of CANALERT.
- Provinces and territories will manage and administer the use of CANALERT in their respective jurisdictions.

CANALERT's reach

- CANALERT has a vast reach, since radio and TV broadcasters cover 99% of the Canadian population, and 96% of Canadians live within a cell phone coverage area;
- Solutions are being examined for remote locations not served by current media or telecommunications infrastructure and for people who use assistive technologies and therefore might not be able to receive the alerts;
- CANALERT targets specific geographic areas and municipalities or parts thereof, depending on the nature of the emergency and the technology used;
- Because it conforms to North American standards, CANALERT is compatible with systems in the United States and Environment Canada's Weatheradio service;
- Communities in high-risk areas are encouraged to establish additional alerting capabilities such as local telephone notification systems and sirens.

CANALERT partnerships

As part of its responsibility for telecommunications during emergencies, Industry Canada is leading the implementation of CANALERT in partnership with other federal departments, provincial, territorial and municipal governments, and the broadcasting and telecommunications industries.

For more information, visit our website at:

<http://www.canalert.gc.ca>

or call us toll-free at 1-866-266-9031.



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