

BENICIA EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM

Valero Community Advisory Panel
October 9, 2018

HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ALERTS IN BENICIA



- For many years, Benicia Emergency Managers had no efficient method of alerting the public to significant incidents in the community.
- In early 2000, the Benicia Fire Department began addressing this situation and developed the Community Alert & Notification (CAN) System
- In 2001, seven large sirens were mounted on large poles strategically placed throughout the community.

HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ALERTS IN BENICIA (cont.)



- The system was intended to alert the community to potentially hazardous incidents.
- The sirens were designed to activate in conjunction with messages being broadcast on our local television and AM radio stations.
- The intent was that citizens hearing the sirens would tune to the radio or television for further information or instructions related to the incident.



CHALLENGES WITH THE BENICIA CAN SYSTEM

- Difficult for emergency responders in the field to broadcast initial or updated messages.
- The system provided no information to citizens who were out in the community, away from their TVs or AM radios.
- The mechanical sirens were powered by a battery system with A/C trickle charge which resulted in regular maintenance issues.



CHALLENGES WITH THE BENICIA CAN SYSTEM (cont.)

- The sirens were essentially WWII technology and although loud, were not always capable of being heard inside of today's modern, more airtight homes.
- The software that linked the sirens activation to the local broadcast information became obsolete and the company that serviced it went out of business.
- With the software link broken and with numerous power issues, the sirens were placed out of service from approximately 2014 until 2016



System Upgrade

- In early 2016 the City began a major upgrade to the emergency notification system in Benicia.
- The Benicia Fire Department partnered with Everbridge to add **AlertBenicia**, a powerful notification system to the existing siren system.
- Siren upgrades included conversion to A/C power with battery back-up.
- The siren activation software was changed.



How does it work

- **AlertBenicia** utilizes modern technology to allow anyone who lives or works in Benicia to register for emergency alerts.
- Registrants can opt-in to receive alerts via
 - Mobile phone
 - Land line phone
 - SMS text device
 - Email
 - Everbridge app
 - TTY / TTD Device
- The system is also capable of sending WEA Alerts

How does it work (cont.)

In addition to selecting contact methods, registrants select one or more locations based on address. Examples may include home, work, school, etc.



How does it work (cont.)



- System can be activated by City staff from any computer with internet connectivity.
- May be activated by emergency commanders in the field via a mobile application.
- May also be activated through Benicia's 9-1-1 Dispatch Center.
- Allows the notifications to be sent independent or in conjunction with the community sirens.
- Notifications can be targeted based on locations on a map.

What Alerts Can be Sent?

Get important updates about:

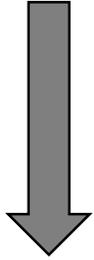
- Natural or Human Made Disasters
- Evacuations
- Floods
- Lockdowns
- Missing Persons
- Major Power Outages
- Road Closures
- Severe Weather
- Utility Failures
- And Much More!



Current System Information



- System launched on September 22, 2016
- Robust Public Outreach Campaign: Social Media, Print and News Media, Website, City Manager Report, Local Cable Channel, Community Organizations, BUSD, Farmers Market, 680 Billboard, Flyers, Open House, and more...
- To Date – Over 6000 Benicia Registrants



Current System Information

- Solano County OES received grant for regional emergency alerting
- June 2018 – Solano County launched AlertSolano (formerly AlertBenicia)
- All Solano County agencies now on same platform
- Provides ability for Solano County to send emergency alerts during disasters, including IPAWS messages



Why Should I Sign Up?

The success of this service *depends on YOU.*

Having your latest contact information is the only way to ensure that we can contact you in an emergency.

It takes only about a minute to enroll!



Get up-to-date emergency notifications & community information on any device.

FIRE EARTHQUAKE
FLOOD COMMUNITY INFO

How Can I Sign Up?

Please sign up at www.AlertSolano.com

It only takes about a minute to enroll!

For General Information:

AlertSolano@SolanoCounty.com

For Benicia Specific Questions:

beniciafire@alertbenicia.org

707-746-4749

Start receiving alerts today!



www.AlertSolano.com

For more information:

City of Benicia
250 East L Street
Benicia, CA 94510

Registration Assistance:
beniciafire@alertbenicia.org
707-746-4749

**Thank you in advance for you cooperation
and participation in this important program!**