TORRANCE ALERTS POLICY STATEMENT & GUIDELINES

City of Torrance
Mass Notification System (TorranceAlerts)
Effective July 18, 2017

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide governance and guidelines on the use and management of a City of Torrance, Mass Notification System, hereinafter referred to as "TorranceAlerts".

This document is intended to be general, describing citywide policy statement, roles and responsibilities, and activation guidelines rather than specific step-by-step procedures. Step-by-step procedures for activation and use will be maintained in separate documents by certain City departments, including but not limited to City Manager's Office, Fire Department, Police Department, and Public Works Department.

SYSTEM DESCRIPTION

TorranceAlerts is a mass notification system designed to keep Torrance, California residents and businesses informed of emergencies when a "call-to-action" is required.

The primary intent of TorranceAlerts is to disseminate early warning and time-sensitive information to City businesses and residents during time of an emergency event. TorranceAlerts is only one component of the City of Torrance Public Warning System. As deemed fit by the City, TorranceAlerts should be used in conjunction with the other public warning systems including, but not limited to, the Torrance Refining Company sirens, Crenshaw/Del Amo Barrier Systems, Torrance Amateur Radio Association (TARA), phone bank, social media, radio (CitiSOUNDS AM1620), and television (CitiCABLE 3, 31, 25.2).

The TorranceAlerts is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

There are **three methods of deployment**:

1. Torrance <u>landline phone numbers</u> (including unlisted) have been pre-loaded and associated with citywide geographic maps (commonly referred to as reverse 9-1-1);
2. <u>Self-registration or "Opt-in"</u> provides additional contact information and preferred method to receive messages (phone, email, and/or text), and what type of notifications requested. The customer can register via the City's website - TorranceCA.Gov/TorranceAlerts.
3. The <u>Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS)</u> is designed to improve public safety through the rapid dissemination of emergency messages to as many people as possible over as many communications devices as possible, including: radio and television stations via the Emergency Alert System (EAS), cellular phones via Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), NOAA All-Hazards National Weather Radio (NWR) via the IPAWS-NOAA gateway, internet applications and websites via the IPAWS All-Hazards Information Feed, and unique and local systems (e.g. digital road signs, sirens). <u>No registration is needed</u>, systems work by broadcasting alerts through cellular towers, EAS, NWR, and Internet.

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GOVERNANCE
City of Torrance City's Manager's Office will manage TorranceAlerts as a citywide asset and will take appropriate measures to ensure it is in a state of operational readiness at all times as approved by the Torrance City Council.

The three methods of **deployment** are managed under separate authorities:

Method #1 (landline)
- TorranceAlerts utilizes the 9-1-1 database to complete the notifications. The use of the 9-1-1 database is regulated by the California Public Utilities Code (CPUC) sections 2872 and 2891.1. The information contained in the 9-1-1 database is confidential and proprietary and shall not be disclosed or utilized, except by authorized personnel for the purpose of emergency notifications.

Method #2 (opt-in)
- TorranceAlerts utilizes a subscription-based service and customers determine and manage their own accounts.

Method #3 (no registration needed)
- IPAWS is managed by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA).

MESSAGING
Upon a decision to activate, TorranceAlerts will be used to send a message through one or more of the Methods above. The message will describe the situation and recommended action the community should take, including impact on businesses and households via telephone, email and/or text [(Short Message Service (SMS)].

An emergency is considered when a "call-to-action" is required. Examples may include "avoid this intersection," "shelter-in-place," "evacuate this area." All other types of notifications will be placed on TorranceCA.Gov/TorranceAlertsAdvisories and social media or sent as non-emergency "Advisories" or "Community Messages."

The intent of TorranceAlerts is for "emergency use," although upon consent of the City Manager, optional use may be authorized to disseminate "government-related" non-emergency notifications to the community.

Confirmation Receipt
Once a message has been sent, users are required to confirm receipt when there is a health or safety notification. If confirmation receipt is not sent by user, the system will repeat attempts to contact user.

Notifications that are not health or safety related, will not require receipt and will only be sent to the primary contact once.

Customers
The City will determine if the message is intended for internal and/or external distribution based on the incident or event.
1. **Internal customers** are government personnel that manage or coordinate emergency information:
    a. Specific registered local, state, federal government personnel;
    b. Specific registered School District personnel.
2. **External Customers** is anyone that is registered or not registered with TorranceAlerts:
    a. **Residents** anyone with a landline telephone within the City of Torrance;
    b. **Registered General Public** is anyone that has registered to receive notifications;
    c. **Non-Registered General Public** is anyone within notification area with a mobile, radio, and/or television device when IPAWS is activated.

<u>Subscriptions</u>
1. Customers may determine what types of information they would like to receive e.g., refinery, Farmers Market, Lane/Road Closures/Detours, Special Events, etc.
2. Customers also determine how they wish to receive messaging: telephone, email and/or text [(Short Message Service (SMS)].

EMERGENCY USE
Use of TorranceAlerts for emergency activity contains two components:
1. The need to disseminate critical, safety-related information to individuals within a short timeframe (external), and
2. Communicating with safety-responder staff, volunteers and involved parties about an approaching or present emergency event (internal).

<u>Emergency Public (external) Notifications</u> are limited to:
1. Imminent or perceived threat to life or property
2. Disaster notifications
3. Evacuation notices
4. Public health emergencies
5. Public safety emergencies
6. Any notification to provide emergency information to a defined community

As a general rule, TorranceAlerts is to be used when the public is being asked to take some action (e.g. evacuate, prepare to evacuate, shelter in place, boil tap water before drinking, missing child, notification of closure of the incident). The following criteria should be utilized to assist with determining the need to issue an alert:
1. **Severity**. Is there a significant threat to public life and safety?
2. **Public Protection**. Is there a need for members of the public to take a protective action in order to reduce loss of life or substantial loss of property?
3. **Warning**. Will providing warning information assist members of the public in making the decision to take proper and prudent action?
4. **Timing**. Does the situation require immediate public knowledge in order to avoid adverse impact?
5. **Geographical area**. Is the situation limited to a defined geographical area? Is that area of a size that will allow for an effective use of the system, given the outgoing call capacity?
6. Are other means of disseminating the information inadequate to ensure proper and time delivery of the information?

If the answer to ALL of these questions is "Yes", then an activation of the TorranceAlerts for emergency purposes is warranted.

<u>Emergency (internal) Response Notifications</u> are limited to:
1. Contacting first responders to advise of an emergency
2. Contacting first responders to report for duty due to an emergency
3. Contacting key staff regarding an emergency or crisis situation
4. Exercises

<u>Emergency (internal/external) considerations</u>:
1. Notification shall clearly state situation is an emergency
2. Message length shall not exceed 60 seconds
3. Always provide a phone number or website where the public can obtain additional or updated information
4. An all clear notification should be sent when applicable

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NON-EMERGENCY USE
There are two types of non-emergency messaging that TorranceAlerts may employ. These messages will be sent to an eNotify webpage and designated social media (Facebook and Twitter) or opt-in community via email with certain subscriptions (see Attachment #1), so customers may become informed:
1. **Advisories** would be sent for a specific geographic area. Examples include lost children, missing persons, crime sprees, water main breaks, information from other government agencies such as weather, air quality, etc.
2. **Community Messages** would include information about city-sponsored events, situations that impact a specific area, and important public meetings or gatherings.

Non-emergency considerations:
1. Community can become desensitized to too many government messages
2. Clearly identify sender or announcement as non-emergency
3. Creates unrealistic expectations and confusion of use

PROHIBITED USE
Non-emergency public notification use is prohibited for any of the following purposes:
1. Any message of commercial nature
2. Any message of a political nature
3. Any non-official business (e.g. articles, retirement announcements, etc.)

SYSTEM MANAGER
The City of Torrance City's Manager's Office or designee will be responsible for overall acquisition, accessibility, maintenance, compliance and management of all components required to provide an effective citywide mass notification system.

The City Manager or designee is responsible for:
1. System acquisition, support, and contract management.
2. Policy management and as-needed modification in consultation with public safety.
3. Audit compliance: routine monitoring of TorranceAlerts use to insure policy and contract compliance.
4. Data management: E911 data acquisition, update and compliance monitoring. Citywide map file acquisition, update and overall geo-coding.
5. Testing: facilitate routine test exercise, document overall test results, recommend, execute as needed, and take corrective action.
6. Public education campaign: initiate and facilitate public education campaign aimed at making the public aware of the mass notification system and citizen web portal.

ROUTINE TESTING
TorranceAlerts will be tested quarterly. Test exercises will be geared towards insuring that use of the System in an emergency is optimized. This includes testing operational readiness, activation procedures and system effectiveness, as well as validating data and system processes. Through test exercises, users will be able to observe the mode of operation to augment and refresh system and process knowledge.

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ATTACHMENT #1

S U B S C R I P T I O N S
As of JULY 18, 2017

City Services > Public Works
Street Sweeping Information
Traffic Alerts/Construction Impacts
Water Main Break/Updates

City Services > Public Information
Business
CitiCABLE
Press Releases
Public Notices
Special Events
Water Conservation Measures/ El Nino

City Services > Police Department
Civil Unrest
Community Updates and Events
Contagious Disease Outbreak/Information
Crime Prevention Tips
Crime Trends/Bulletins
Driver's License/Safety Checkpoints
Emergency Preparedness/Hazard Alerts
Event Reminders
Torrance Refinery Flaring/Incident
Lane/Road Closures/Detours
Missing Child and Persons
Police Activity
School Closures and Advisories
Severe Weather Watch/Warning
Sobriety Checkpoint Notices
Town Hall Meetings
Traffic Impacts
Utility Advisory
Wanted Suspects