

COLUMBIA BASIN OPERATIONAL AREA

Public Alert and Warning System

Plan

INCLUDING

Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla Counties



April 2026

Columbia Basin Operational Area
Public Alert and Warning System Plan

RECORD OF CHANGES

NOTICE TO PLAN HOLDERS: In order to maintain a current Columbia Basin IPAWS Plan, changes will occur and be issued periodically. **Please make those changes upon receipt**, and record them on this page. If a previous change number shows no entry, you may not have an up-to-date version of the plan.

Change Number	Date	Location/Page(s) Changed	Initials
01	March 2026	Updated plan to include IPAWS and better align with State WA-PAWS plan. Updated contact information. Removed Amber Alert appendix.	ADB
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Columbia Basin
LOCAL OPERATIONAL AREA PLAN

1. INTRODUCTION

IPAWS is FEMA's national system for local alerting that provides authenticated emergency and life-saving information to the public through:

- The Emergency Alert System (EAS)
 - Radio & TV Stations, Cable Systems and Satellite providers
- Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)
 - Cellular telephones and other wireless devices
- Non-Weather Emergency Messages
 - NOAA Weather Radio

The Primary purpose of these systems is to deliver Presidential Messages to citizens when other communications systems are not functional and/or in parallel with those systems.

These systems, when not in use for Federal purposes, can be utilized by state and local governments for public warning message distribution. Should the system be in use for state or local public warnings, a Presidential Message shall take priority.

The National Weather Service (NWS) operates NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) whose primary purpose is to deliver weather and flood related public warning messages and can be utilized to distribute non-weather emergency messages.

The Washington State Emergency Communications Committee (SECC) is responsible for administrating IPAWS on the state level. The SECC has divided Washington State into several Local Operational Areas. Each Local Area is administered by a Local Emergency Communications Committee (LECC). The LECCs are responsible for designing and writing a LOCAL AREA PLAN which will become part of the Washington State Public Alert and Warning System (WA-PAWS) Plan.

This is the LOCAL OPERATIONAL AREA PLAN for the Columbia Basin Local Operational Area which includes Benton, Franklin and Walla Walla counties of Washington State. It provides guidelines to local authorities for the distribution of emergency information and warnings to the public. This Local IPAWS Plan may be activated by authorized officials 24 hours a day in response to time-critical emergencies such as severe weather, floods, civil disorders, earthquakes, hazardous materials accidents, or any other occurrence which poses a danger to life.

2. AUTHORIZATION

This plan is written in accordance with Title 47 U.S.C. 151, 154 (i) and (o), 303 (r), 524 (g) and 606; and 47 C.F.R. Part 11, FCC Rules and Regulations, Emergency Alert System (EAS).

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3. THE LECC

The LECC for this local operational area is made up of representatives from broadcast radio and television stations, cable systems, county government, and emergency service agencies in Benton, Franklin, and Walla Walla counties. It is a sub-committee of the Washington SECC and is responsible for administering this local area plan. A list of current committee members is located in Appendix 1.

4. THE EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM

The EAS is an electronic alerting system capable of providing emergency information from national, state, and local sources to the general public through radio and television broadcast stations and subject cable systems. EAS protocol allows the encoding of emergency messages using standard codes for various types of emergencies. It also allows messages to be tailored to specific geographic areas so information can be delivered quickly to those areas which are affected by an emergency. Basic information regarding local emergencies is encoded into digital data and sent to local broadcast stations and cable systems via one of three methods:

- Over the internet using IPAWS alert origination software such as CodeRED and Everbridge.
 - This software uses the IPAWS Common Alerting Protocol (CAP)
 - Broadcasters utilize Encoder/Decoder devices that poll the IPAWS-CAP server for emergency alerts affecting their operational area.
- The Local Relay Network (LRN) at 155.82 MHz using an Encoder/Decoder device and a transmitting radio.
- The State Relay Network (SRN) at 155.475 MHz, coordinated through the State EOC.

The FCC requires broadcasters and subject cable operators to have EAS encode/decode devices at their facilities to receive and forward national EAS messages and required weekly and monthly tests. These same devices may be used, at the broadcasters or cable operators' discretion, for local emergencies. Local emergency management entities may purchase the necessary equipment to send EAS information via the LRN to local broadcast and cable facilities for transmission to the general public. All local EAS activity is subject to the authority of the LECC and the guidelines presented in this local area plan.

The EAS is designed to work without the need for personal contact with anyone at broadcast stations or cable facilities. Activating entities issuing emergency messages should assume that no one is at the broadcast or cable facilities and must formulate and transmit complete emergency messages. Broadcasters and cable operators will simply forward the local emergency information they receive (if they choose to participate at the local level).

5. WIRELESS EMERGENCY ALERTS (WEA)

Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) is a system that enables authorized governmental and tribal authorities to send geo-targeted emergency alerts to the public via broadcast messages to compatible cell phones and mobile devices.

Authorized national, state, or local government alerting authorities may generate Wireless Emergency Alerts regarding public safety emergencies – such as severe weather, missing children, or the need to evacuate.

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Alerting authorities submit WEA alerts via alert “CAP” (Common Alerting Protocol) origination software, and the IPAWS system then serves as a Message Router to relay the WEA messages to all participating wireless carriers. The wireless carriers then broadcast the alerts to all mobile devices in the area which has been designated by the alert originator. It is the policy of all participating agencies to activate IPAWS in order to alert and warn residents of emergencies that threaten lives. IPAWS will be utilized only when time limitations or incident severity prohibit information distribution to the media through normal channels.

Further instructions to, and information for the public will be disseminated to the news media by the originating agency or by the affected jurisdictions, using normal channels. compatible devices connected to the wireless network within the designated alert area, including those of “roaming” wireless customers, will receive the alert.

An incoming WEA alert is announced by loud alert tones, phone vibration and a message display. The message shows the type and time of the alert, any action that should be taken, and the name of the agency issuing the alert.

Since WEA alerts are carried by the wireless carrier’s control channel, they are not susceptible to network congestion that can interfere with normal SMS (Short Messaging Service) text messages and voice calls.

6. NON-WEATHER EMERGENCY MESSAGES

NOAA/NWS operates NOAA Weather Radio (NWR) stations across the state reaching over 96% of the state’s population. NWR transmits weather and other non-weather emergency messages to broadcast stations and cable systems as well as to the general public through (NWR) receivers.

NOAA Weather Radio urgent weather messages use Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME). SAME coding that specifies the impacted area, event duration, and type of weather event. The message is accompanied by the NWR 1050 Hz warning alarm tone followed by an audible message.

NOAA Weather Radio is an ‘all-hazards’ network warning system. NWS personnel follow procedures found in state and local WA-PAWS plans when either relaying or originating those IPAWS alerts. Non-Weather Emergency Messages (NWEM) originating from National, State and local authorities will be routed via IPAWS to the respective local NWS forecast offices for redistribution on the appropriate NOAA Weather Radio Stations.

7. EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS (ENS)

ENS are software products, developed by private vendors, whereby the software resides on the vendor’s servers, and is leased by a jurisdiction who then uses the system to notify its constituents. These systems rely upon access to the internet and have multiple components/tools which can be used individually or together. Jurisdictions typically sign a lease with the vendor, and then notify the public within their jurisdictional boundaries, using the vendor’s software via the internet. The systems have the ability to send out messages directly to local landline and cell phone users, using a computer process called “Geo-targeting”, whereby the system selects phones in a defined geographical area, targeting the message. The phone numbers are entered into the system via 911 data download (landlines), or user voluntary entry via opt in/signup.

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ENS providers such as CodeRED and Everbridge combine their ENS capabilities with their IPAWS alert origination software to provide comprehensive alerting capability to local alerting authorities.

8. POLICY

It is the policy of all participating agencies to activate IPAWS in order to alert and warn residents of emergencies that threaten lives. IPAWS will be utilized only when time limitations or incident severity prohibit information distribution to the media through normal channels.

Further instructions to, and information for the public will be disseminated to the news media by the originating agency or by the affected jurisdictions, using normal channels.

9. SITUATION

There will be times when it is critical to warn the public and local officials of threatening or occurring emergencies or disasters. There is no single method of warning available, so a combination of warning methods must be utilized. IPAWS is one method used in cooperation with local broadcasters and cable providers.

Examples of incidents that may require warning and use of the IPAWS include: Earthquake, volcano, severe weather, flood, and hazardous materials release. There are other natural and technological incidents that are addressed in local and state Hazard Identification and Vulnerability Analysis documents that may warrant the use of IPAWS.

10. CAUTION STATEMENT

EAS can be a very powerful tool for emergency management organizations, allowing them to notify the general public of impending or occurring emergency situations in a quick and precise manner. The SECC realized that such a powerful tool may present a hardship to broadcast stations and cable systems if it is not used prudently and properly and included the following warning to activating entities in the State IPAWS Plan:

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PERSONNEL NOTE

A WORD OF CAUTION: The Emergency Management/Services community has acquired a valuable tool in gaining direct access to all area broadcasters and subject cable operators via the EAS. However, **if not used prudently, you put yourself in danger of losing this tool. Broadcasters and cable operators are expecting the EAS to be used only for very serious emergencies.** Keep in mind two things. First, some broadcasters and cable operators have their EAS decoders set on Automatic Mode. There is no one there to screen your message and decide if it should be aired. They are depending on you to send an EAS Alert **only for a very serious emergency.** The first time you trigger the system for a frivolous event, you will **lose** the confidence of your area broadcasters and cable operators. The second thing is broadcasters and cable operators participate in the local-level EAS on a **voluntary** basis. No one can force them to carry your EAS Alerts. Maintain a good relationship with your local broadcasters and cable operators.

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11. IPAWS DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply to IPAWS terms which have been used in the development of this local area plan. For a more comprehensive list of IPAWS terms, see the Washington State IPAWS Plan, FCC Rules and Regulations, Part 11, FEMA Publication CPG 1-40, or other IPAWS-related publications.

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Activation	The initiation of the EAS by transmission of an EAS message or codes.
Activating Entity	An Emergency Management partner entity that activates the local EAS.
AMBER	America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response.
Attention Signal	Eight to twenty-five seconds of two tones (835 Hz and 960 Hz) used as an audio alert.
CIV	Originator code for civil authorities for EAS activation.
EAN	Emergency Action Notification. National-level EAS alert.
EAN Network	The interconnection of the federal government with national networks and program suppliers used to disseminate the EAN message.
EAS	Emergency Alert System.
EAS Alert	EAS activation in an actual emergency.
EAS Decoder	A device, which monitors sources and decodes incoming EAS messages. A decoder accepts digital bursts and translates them into an audio and/or printed message.
EAS Encoder	A device used by EAS participants to originate EAS alerts by creating the EAS codes for transmission to other participants and the public. The encoder generates messages that may be preset for quick release to other participants and the public.
EAS Test	EAS activation for testing purposes.
Emergency Alert System (EAS)	The national alerting system composed of broadcast networks; cable networks and program suppliers; AM, FM, and TV broadcast stations; low power televisions (LPTV) stations; cable systems; and other entities and industries operating in an organized basis during emergencies at the national, state, or local levels. It requires that at a minimum all participants use a common EAS protocol, as defined in FCC Rules Part 11.31, to send and receive emergency alerts.
End of Message Code	ASCII data string that signifies the end of an EAS message.
Event Code	A three-character ASCII code in the EAS header that denotes the type of event for which an EAS test or alert is issued.
FCC	Federal Communications Commission. One of three federal agencies that participate in EAS.

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TERM	DESCRIPTION
FIPS Codes	Federal Information Processing System number assigned to states and counties defining geographic areas.
Header Codes	A single string of intelligent ASCII data that includes the originator, event, location, time period, and other basic information concerning an EAS test or alert.
IPAWS	The Integrated Public Alert and Warning System
L-Code	The portion of the EAS header code which describes the targeted geographic area for the EAS message.
Local Area Plan	The plan developed by a committee in each local operational area that outlines the EAS system and procedures for that particular area. The local area plan for the appropriate operational area is included in the state plan.
Local Emergency Communications Committee	(LECC) A committee made up of representatives from broadcast radio and television stations, cable systems, county/city government and emergency management. It is a subcommittee of the Washington State Emergency Communications Committee and is responsible for approving and administering the plan.
Local Operational Area	An operational subdivision of the state.
Location Code	A six-digit ASCII code in the EAS header that specifies the location of an emergency utilizing the five character FIPS code of a state and county, and a sixth character to designate one of nine divisions of a county.
LP	Local Primary. One or more broadcast stations in each local area has been designated as a local primary station. The LP is the primary source of EAS programming for the local area. A local area may have more than one LP, in which case the stations are designated LP- 1, LP-2, etc.
LPTV	Low-power television station.
LRN	Local Relay Network. A radio or other communications system used to distribute sources of local operational area EAS information to broadcast stations and cable systems in the local area.
National Alert	EAS alert of national origin.
NN	Non-participating National. Broadcasters which elect not to participate in national level EAS. These stations must sign off the air during national alerts, but may elect to participate in local EAS.
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. One of three federal agencies that participate in EAS.
NOAA Weather Radio	(NWR) A service of the National Weather Service that provides continuous broadcasts of the latest weather information and any weather-related emergency warnings to a local area. NWR uses seven VHF radio frequencies.
Nuclear Plant / Industrial Plant	Nuclear and other industrial plants with a potential for dangerous conditions may have their own specific EAS plans which must

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TERM	DESCRIPTION
	conform to EAS standards and be approved by the LECC.
NWR	NOAA Weather Radio.
NWS	National Weather Service. NWS is an operation of NOAA that is directly responsible for issuing local weather-related emergency alerts and warnings in addition to day-to-day forecasts and other weather activities.
Originator	The entity that originates an EAS alert.
Originator Code	A three-character ASCII code in the EAS header that identifies the entity that originates an EAS test or alert.
PEP	Primary Entry Point. A broadcast station which can serve as an entry point for national EAS information in the event that the primary national alerting methods are inoperable.
PN	Participating National. Broadcast stations and cable systems that deliver all levels of EAS to the general public, including local information.
Protocol	A standard set of guidelines by which digital information is encoded and decoded, including the common code structure, the character set used, the sequence and timing of codes, and modulation technique used for radio transmission.
RMT	Required Monthly Test. A coordinated monthly test of EAS operations involving the full receiving and transmission of EAS codes, attention signal, EAS test programming, and EAS end-of- message codes.
RWT	Required Weekly Test. An independent weekly test of EAS equipment only involving the decoding and encoding of EAS header codes and end-of-message codes.
SECC	State Emergency Communications Committee.
SRN	State Relay Network. A system of facilities used to distribute state EAS activations and programming across the state.
State EAS Plan	A document that outlines the organization and implementation of EAS in Washington State. It includes monitoring assignments, actions to be taken in emergency activations, and other guidelines for broadcasters and cable personnel in use of the EAS in Washington State.
State Emergency Communications Committee (Washington)	(SECC) The state committee who administers the EAS plan at the state level.
Time-Duration Code	A four-digit ASCII code in the EAS header that defines how long the EAS activation is valid.
WEA	Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) , is an alerting network in the United States designed to disseminate emergency alerts to mobile devices such as cell phones and <u>pag</u> ers.

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12. THE EAS WEB

One of the keys to the success of the EAS is its web architecture. Web architecture refers to the network that is formed when the broadcast stations and cable systems monitor multiple sources for EAS information. The SECC has the responsibility of developing and maintaining monitoring assignments for each broadcast station and cable system in such a way as to build an efficient monitoring web. A current list of the broadcast and cable facilities in this local area and their EAS designations can be found in Appendix 2. Monitoring assignments for these facilities are located in the State EAS Plan.

13. LOCAL RELAY NETWORK

The LECC has developed a Local Relay Network (LRN) which is one of the sources monitored in the EAS web. Local emergency management entities input local EAS information into the LRN and broadcast and cable facilities receive that information either directly from the LRN or via another source which monitors the LRN and passes the information along (most often the LP station).

It is the responsibility of the activating entities to obtain a transmitter and receiver (or transceiver) and related equipment to activate and monitor the LRN, an EAS encode/decode device to generate and monitor EAS information, and any other necessary equipment (computer terminal, software, microphone, etc.). The LECC is not responsible for providing the necessary equipment.

The location of an EAS encoder must meet the following criteria:

- Secure against unauthorized access
- Staffed 24 hours/day
- Auxiliary power available
- Direct communications with emergency service agencies and officials

14. AUTHENTICATION

Each entity which operates an EAS encoder shall be responsible for use of the encoder at all times. A method of authentication and identification of personnel and information should be developed by each entity to ensure that access to the encoder is limited to those people who are authorized to activate the system. This information shall be submitted to the LECC and included in Appendix 5 of this local plan.

It is imperative that all EAS information input into the LRN be accurate. Broadcasters and cable operators will assume that the information is authorized and valid as received. Some facilities may be operating in automatic mode in which case the EAS information will be immediately broadcast with absolutely no human intervention. No authentication will take place at the broadcast or cable facilities; the information must be correct when it leaves the origination point.

15. EAS PROTOCOL

The EAS uses a specific protocol described in detail in the FCC Rules and Regulations and in

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the State EAS plan. EAS encode/decode devices allow operators to input information in plain English, then automatically convert that information into digital data and output it as an audio signal, just like a computer modem. The encoder formats the information to match the EAS protocol.

EAS activations (tests or alerts) will consist of up to four elements:

- A header code
- An attention signal
- An aural message
- An end of message code

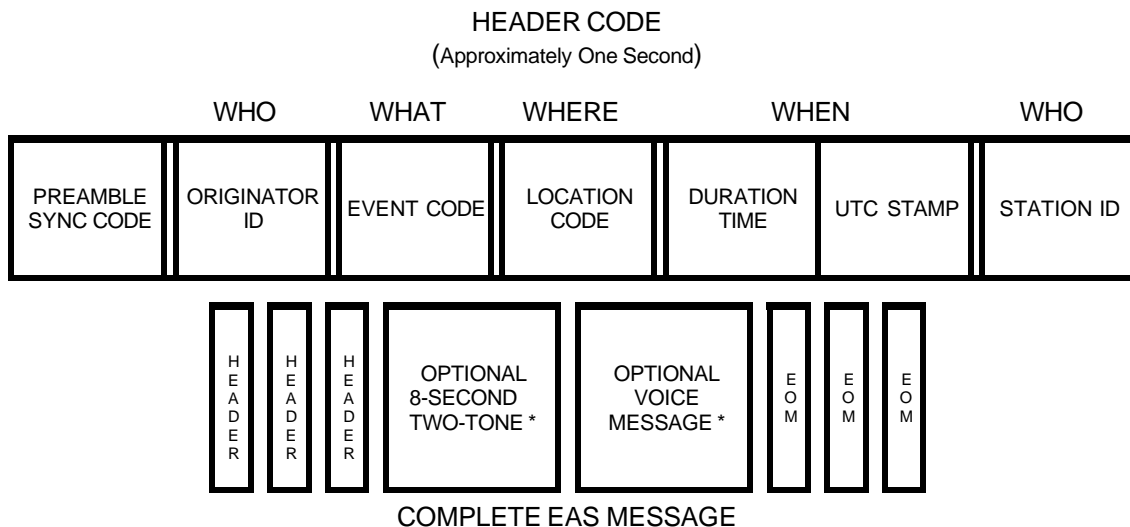
All EAS activations will include a header code data burst. The header code will be sent three times, with a one-second pause after each transmission, to ensure proper reception by EAS decoders. The header code contains the basic EAS message in digital form.

Following the header code, a two-tone attention signal may be used to alert listeners and viewers that an EAS activation has occurred and that a voice message will follow. The attention signal should be used if, and only if, a voice message will be included as part of the alert.

A voice message will follow the attention signal. Use of the two-tone attention signal and a voice message will be determined by the originator of the alert; they are not required, but if one is used the other must accompany it. The voice message should give a concise description of the emergency and may give additional information not included in the header codes. See section 14 on page 12 for guidance on the formulation of voice messages.

All EAS activations will conclude with an end-of-message code data burst. The end-of-message code will be sent three times, with a one-second pause after each transmission, to ensure proper reception by EAS decoders.

The following diagram shows the relationship of the four EAS elements and also shows the information included in the header codes:



*See the text regarding the use of the two-tone attention signal and the aural message.

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16. INITIAL SETUP OF EAS ENCODE/DECODE DEVICES

When an EAS encode/decode device is first installed it will be necessary to enter certain information (such as what organization operates the unit, where it's located, the date and time, etc.) into the software. Three pieces of information warrant an explanation in this local plan:

The ORIGINATOR CODE describes the type of entity originating EAS activation. The only originator codes are:

- EAN - Emergency Action Notification Network
- PEP - Primary Entry Point System
- NWS - National Weather Service
- CIV - Civil authorities
- EAS - Broadcast station or cable system

An L-CODE identifies the broadcaster, cable operator, Weather Service office, civil authority, or nuclear/industrial plant which operated the encoder that transmitted or retransmitted an activation.

L-Code identification must adhere to the following formats:

Broadcasters:

Use station call letters as the L-Code identifier.

- Examples: Single station: KXXX (FM)
- Two stations: KXXXKYYY
- Three or more stations: The call letters of one of the stations is sufficient. The other stations sending the alert should keep a log of alerts sent as should the station which was identified in the L-Code portion of the header.

Cable Television:

Refer to the State IPAWS Plan, TAB C7 for instructions for cable systems.

Civil Authorities:

L-Codes for civil authorities will be constructed in the following manner:

Portion of the code	Source of characters
First four characters	First four letters of the name of jurisdiction (Name of county, city, etc.)

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Next two characters	Abbreviation of the type of jurisdiction: CO = County CY = City TN = Town VL = Village TP = Township MY = Municipality
Last two characters	Abbreviation of the type of agency: SH = Sheriff FD = Fire Department PD = Police Department TA = Traffic Authority ES = Emergency Services EG = Emergency Government EM = Emergency Management

Examples: BCEM
 FCEM
 WWEM

Military Groups:

Military groups should use the following as L-Code identifiers:

Army ----- U.S. ARMY
 Navy ----- U.S. NAVY
 Air Force ----- AIRFORCE
 Marine Corps --- U.S.M.C.
 Coast Guard ----- U.S.C.G.

Industry:

Refer to the State IPAWS Plan for instructions regarding Industry.

Consult the operator manual for the proper information and procedures for setting up specific EAS encode/decode devices.

17. PROGRAMMING AN EAS EVENT

The EAS encoder will require three basic pieces of information from the alert originator when being programmed for an EAS alert:

- The type of event (event code)

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- The locations affected by the event (FIPS code)
- The duration of the event

Event Code

An EVENT CODE defines what type of alert is being issued. Each type of emergency requires a unique event code. The FCC has defined numerous event codes for use in the EAS. A list of valid event codes is included in Appendix 6. It is possible to add new event codes by making a request to the LECC for a new code. If the LECC agrees with the need for the code it will pass the request on to the SECC. If the SECC agrees with the need for the code it will pass the request on to the FCC for approval. Only those event codes approved by the FCC may be used.

Location Code

A LOCATION CODE defines the geographic area affected by the emergency. EAS location codes are based on the Federal Information Processing System (FIPS) codes. In this system, each state has been assigned a two-digit number and each county in each state has been assigned a three-digit number. The combination of the state number and the county number gives each county in the entire country a unique five-digit identification number (SSCCC). The EAS precedes this five-digit number with an additional one-digit number to break down each county into nine different areas so that a portion of a county in any state can be defined using a single six-digit number (PSSCCC).

The boundaries of the smaller county portions described by the “P” portion of the EAS location code are determined by the LAECC in close cooperation with county government officials and local emergency management officials. Maps and descriptions of the county subdivisions are included in Appendix 7.

Location Code Examples

The FIPS code for Washington State is 053000. Benton County is 53005. Franklin County is 53021. Walla Walla County is 53071. Here are some examples of EAS location codes for this local operational area:

EAS LOCATION CODE		AREA DESCRIBED
053005	=	Entire Benton County
353005	=	Section 3 of Benton County
053021	=	Entire Franklin County
553021	=	Section 5 of Franklin County
053071	=	Entire Walla Walla County
153071	=	Section 1 of Walla Walla Co.

Event Duration Code

An EVENT DURATION CODE defines how long an alert is expected to be in effect. The duration must be determined by the originator when the alert is issued. Valid durations can be entered in 15-minute segments up to one hour and then in 30-minute segments beyond one

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hour. For example:

0015	= 15 minutes
0030	= 30 minutes
0045	= 45 minutes
0100	= 1 hour
0230	= 2 hours 30 minutes
0400	= 4 hours

Programming Note

The method used to enter the required information into the EAS encoder will vary according to the type of encoder and related equipment being used. In most cases the device will use plain English and will be very straight-forward. Consult the operator manual for instructions specific to the encoder being used.

18. LOCAL EAS ACTIVATION PROCEDURE

In the event of an emergency an authorized individual should contact an activating entity and request that an IPAWS alert be issued. Proper identification and authentication procedures should be followed to ensure that the person requesting the activation is authorized to do so. Preparation and transmission by the activating entity should include the following steps:

1. Authenticate the emergency.
2. Determine whether the message will be sent via the Emergency Notification Software (CodeRED or Everbridge) or via the local relay network.
3. IF the message is to be sent via the ENS, follow the procedure for your ENS.
4. IF the message is to be sent via LRN
 - Determine whether a voice message is needed.
 - Assure that the encoder is programmed with the correct Event Code, Location Code, and Time Duration.
 - Check the voice message, if one is required, for clarity and accuracy.
 - Ensure the LRN channel is clear to send the EAS message.
 - Send the message.
 - Verify that the message was sent correctly.

Request for Activation

When the incident commander or highest ranking official at the scene of an incident determines that an IPAWS message must be initiated to preserve lives, he or she will contact the authorized individual from that jurisdiction who has authority to request activation of IPAWS. That person will contact his or her local IPAWS authorized agency. If the local IPAWS activation authority or its alternate (if designated in local plans) cannot be contacted, IPAWS activation may be requested through Washington State Emergency Management.

It is the responsibility of the agency initiating the IPAWS message to confirm the incident with a reliable source (dispatch center or incident commander). Many broadcast stations will automatically air all EAS messages and have no mechanism to confirm or edit information. It is

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critical that the agency sending the alert authenticate the information prior to transmission to broadcasters.

19. THE VOICE MESSAGE

A voice message is not required when originating an EAS alert but is highly recommended since radio cannot present EAS information visually and listeners cannot decipher the information contained in the EAS header codes. A voice message must be less than two minutes in length. The FCC rules state that decoders must be capable of recording at least two minutes of audio or test messages. Most decoders are not capable of recording more than two minutes of audio. The more concise and precise the voice message, the better it is.

Notification of Affected Agencies

Notification of affected jurisdictions and government officials will normally occur simultaneously with transmission of the IPAWS message whenever possible. There will be times when warning the public is time-critical and the IPAWS message will be sent before other notifications are made. In addition to affected jurisdictions, notification includes Washington State Emergency Management. A request will be made for Washington State Emergency Management to notify other counties of the activation of IPAWS. The method of notification may include, but is not limited to, telephones, radios, computers, ACCESS, and NAWAS.

The activation of IPAWS for any purpose will generate calls from the public, government officials and the news media. Whenever possible, affected jurisdictions should be contacted at the same time the IPAWS message is being generated.

20. TRAINING FOR IPAWS PARTICIPANTS

It is the responsibility of the managers of broadcast stations, cable systems, and activating entities to ensure that all pertinent personnel in their organizations are properly trained to operate all relevant aspects of the IPAWS system that applies to their situation.

Training of all operators is critical to the success of the IPAWS. Each agency must establish procedures and a training plan that includes detailed instruction, hands-on use of the ENDEC and two-way radio, and continuing spot-testing of operators.

Training should also include complete familiarity with event codes and their application to various emergencies and the FEMA guidelines for preparing voice messages. This training is also useful in understanding alerts originated by other agencies and relayed via the repeater(s).

21. TESTING

Testing is an important aspect of IPAWS. Testing will ensure that the system is operational and will help to pinpoint and correct hardware, software and operational problems.

Required Monthly Tests/Required Weekly Tests

FCC rules specify that broadcasters and cable systems must run a Required Monthly Test once each month, and that during the weeks when an RMT does not run, a Required Weekly Test (RWT) must run. (There are some exceptions to this which are detailed in the FCC Rules and Regulations, Part 11.61(a)(6).) The RWT is originated at each broadcast/cable facility and is

Columbia Basin Operational Area Public Alert and Warning System Plan

scheduled randomly by that facility. The RMT is a coordinated test that contains all the elements of an actual EAS alert (header codes, two-tone alert, voice message, end-of-message codes). It originates from different locations each month based on guidelines established by the SECC and runs on dates and at times determined by the EAS Test Coordinator under the guidance of the SECC.

The following procedures were adopted on March 11, 2009 by the SECC for dealing with failures in the initiation or distribution of RMTs.

1. When it's clear that an RMT failed or was sent as a DMO or RWT, the originating agency will not attempt to resend unless the problem is obvious, can be corrected quickly, and the RMT can be resent no later than 10 minutes after the scheduled time. If the RMT was mistakenly sent as an actual Alert, the agency will NOT attempt to send another RMT.
2. Investigation and documentation of a failed RMT is the responsibility of the LECC Chair, unless he or she is unavailable or otherwise unable to carry out those duties. In the latter case, the incident becomes the responsibility of the SECC Chair, who may delegate duties relevant to the event.
3. The person investigating an RMT failure will post a brief notice on the Washington State EAS Remailer as soon as possible after the event and will post an explanation suitable

for broadcaster logging once the cause of the problem has been determined. He or she will not post speculative information.

Notes to RMT Schedule

*Nighttime tests must run between local sunset and 8:30 AM. Nighttime tests are no longer scheduled in the middle of the night so people with weather radios will not be disturbed by their radios being activated by an RMT. The schedule deviates from the Originator Schedule in the State IPAWS Plan so that local areas are not responsible for all nighttime tests. The State DEM will not activate in the middle of the night in consideration of the participants in the REP program. The NWS will not activate in the middle of the night in consideration of those people who are alerted by the tone alert system.

****The October test coincides with a FEMA-required activation of the annual Siren test in Franklin and Benton Counties.

*****Exact times are shown. This will help traffic, programming, and operations departments prepare for the incoming test.

*****Broadcast stations and cable systems have 1 hour to forward an RMT after receiving it.

- **Test Schedules may be modified by the SECC. See the [WA-PAWS website](#) for the current schedule.**

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In those months when the RMT is scheduled to originate from the Local Operational Areas it will be originated by one of the activating entities in this local area. The LECC will assign activating entities to originate the RMT during the months when the test will be originated in the local operational area. The schedule is located in Appendix 7.

Note that the days and times of the RMTs are determined by the SECC. The LECC simply determines which entity will originate the RMT during the months it is to be originated locally.

If an activating entity is unable to perform the RMT, the LECC should be notified and coordinate with another activating entity or the LP station to run the test as scheduled. When sending an RMT, the following settings should be used:

Event code:	RMT
Location code(s):	[ONLY counties in the local operational area!]
Duration:	30 minutes

The voice message will consist of the following script:

- a) **This is a test of the Emergency Alert System. In the event of an emergency, this system would bring you important information. This test is now concluded.**

The RMT script can be read in nine to ten seconds. All other elements of the RMT (the header codes, attention signal and end of message codes) take from 19 to 21 seconds to complete, depending on the number of location codes contained in the header. The goal of writing this short test script was to fit the entire test into a 30 second time period.

Originators should make every attempt to complete this test within 30 seconds. Pre-recording the script at the length needed to achieve this is highly recommended. Tests will be initiated no earlier than 10 minutes prior to scheduled time and no later than 10 minutes after the designated/scheduled time.

NOTE: A DMO (practice test) may be sent at any time an RMT or actual Alert is not being transmitted or is about to be transmitted. Use of DMOs is encouraged as a training tool for personnel at originating agencies.

LRN TESTS

The LRN will be tested periodically to ensure it remains functional. RWTs are not forwarded automatically; the air product of broadcast stations and cable systems will not be affected. A representative of the LP station shall periodically check the station log to confirm receipt of the LRN weekly tests and will notify the LECC if tests are not received successfully.

22. LOCAL AUTHORIZATION

This plan shall be in force and operational when signed by the appropriate county government officials, county emergency management directors, the chairperson of the LAECC, and the chairperson of the SECC. Authorization shall continue until a formal request to terminate participation in the plan is submitted to the LECC.

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23. LECC MEETINGS

The LECC will meet a minimum of once a year to review this local plan and its effectiveness and to make sure all participants are satisfied with their participation. LECC meetings are open to all interested parties and are not restricted to committee members. For the date, time, and location of the next LAECC meeting contact the LAECC chairperson.

24. CHANGES TO THE PLAN

Changes to this plan may be suggested at any time and will be considered at the regular meeting of the LECC unless circumstances require a special meeting at an earlier date, or unless consensus can be achieved through electronic means (e.g., e-mail). All proposed changes must be submitted in writing to the LECC chairperson. Following approval by the LECC, all changes must be submitted to the SECC for final approval.

25. REFERENCES

Title 47 U.S.C. 151, 154 (i) & (o), 303®, 524 (g) & 606; and 47 C.F.R. Part 11, FCC Rules & Regulations, Emergency Alert System. Washington State EAS Plan

Columbia Basin Operational Area
Public Alert and Warning System Plan

APPENDIX 1

**LOCAL OPERATIONAL AREA
Membership List**

Columbia Basin Emergency Communications Committee

LOCAL AREA NAME & LECC CHAIR	E-MAIL ADDRESS	OFFICE PHONE
Franklin County Emergency Management Sean Davis	sdavid@franklincounywa.gov	509-545-3546
Benton County Emergency Management Deanna Davis	d.davis@bc.es.wa.gov	509-628-2600
Walla Walla Emergency Management Chris Lee	clee@wwcowa.gov	509-524-2900
Engineers and Station Managers (from stations listed in Appendix 2)	Jay.white@townsquaremedia.com	509-521-8873
National Weather Service (Pendleton, OR)	w-pdt.webmaster.noaa.gov	541-276-7832
Society of Broadcast Engineers, Chapter 51, Tri-Cities, Wa. (SBE)	gibbs.martin@gmail.com	

APPENDIX 2

COLUMBIA BASIN OPERATIONAL AREA

Broadcast Stations and Participating Cable Systems

WASHINGTON STATE EAS MONITORING ASSIGNMENTS FOR–COLUMBIA BASIN
CAN BE FOUND IN THE WASHINGTON STATE IPAWS PLAN AT:

[WA PAWS | Washington State Military Department](https://mil.wa.gov/wa-paws)
(<https://mil.wa.gov/wa-paws>)

Specific Instructions for Cable Systems

FCC rules require that all wired cable systems that serve 10,000 or more subscribers install EAS equipment and provide EAS audio and video messages on all channels by December 31, 1998.

Wired cable systems with between 5,000 and 9,999 subscribers must meet this same requirement by October 1, 2002.

Wired cable systems with fewer than 5,000 subscribers are to either provide national level EAS message on all programmed channels (including the required testing), or to install EAS equipment and provide a video interrupt and audio alert on all programmed channels and EAS audio and video messages on at least one programmed channel by October 1, 2002.

Current copies of the following documents must be located in all cable system headends that have operational EAS installations:

- 1) CFR 47 Part 11 - FCC Rules on Emergency Alert Systems (These can be downloaded from the FCC's web site, or purchased from a government book store)
- 2) EAS Cable Handbook (This can be downloaded from the FCC's web site).
- 3) State EAS Plan (This can be obtained from the Washington State Emergency Communications Committee - WSECC).
- 4) Local Area EAS Plan - If not incorporated into State Plan (This can be obtained from the WSECC, or your Local Area Emergency Communications Committee - LECC - See tabs 1 & 2).

Satellite radio/television (such as Direct TV or Dish Network) will not receive local EAS messages. The only media that broadcast local EAS messages are local outlets. Only in the case of a national EAS activation would satellite radio or television broadcast EAS statements.

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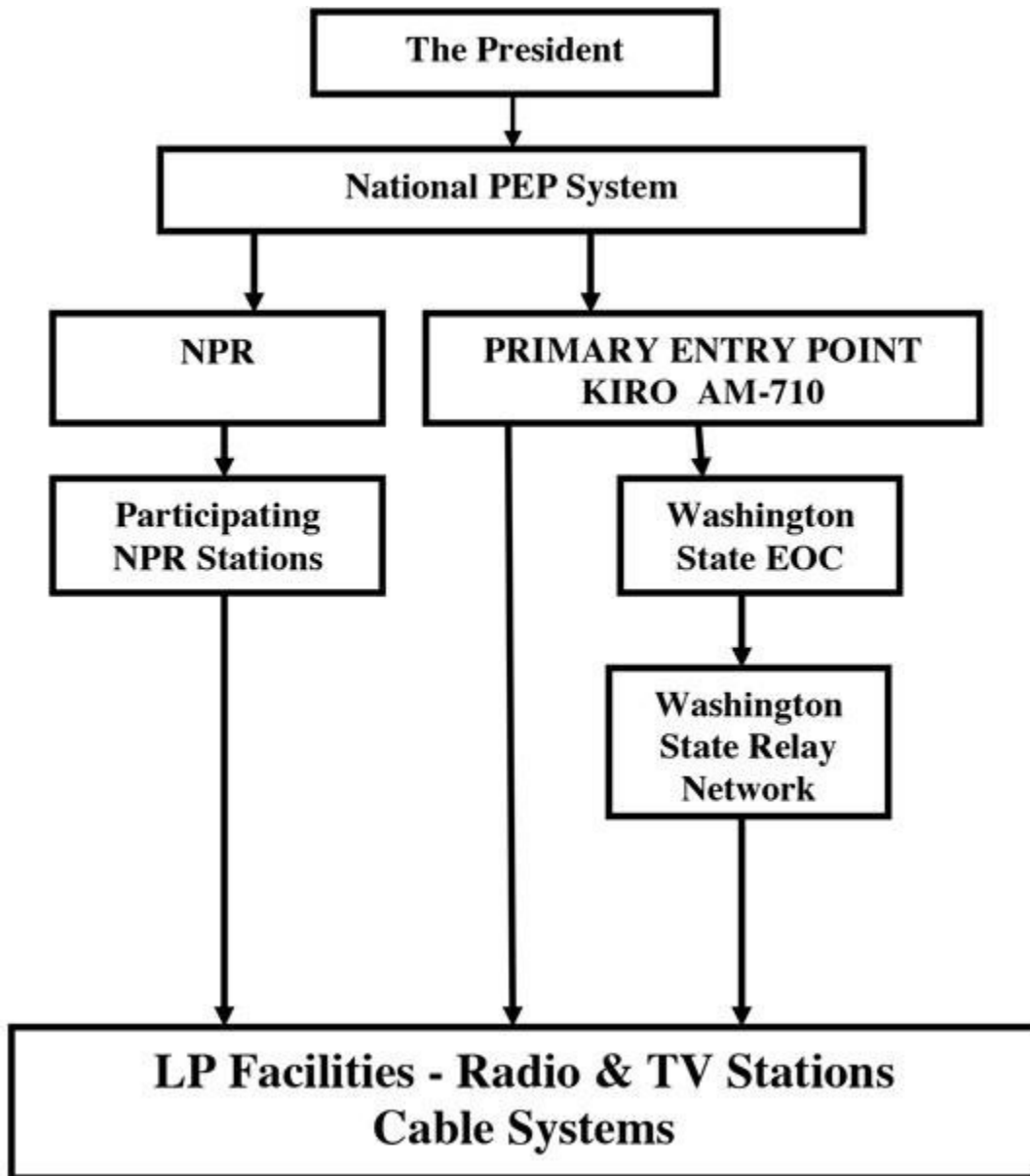
All EAS control personnel are required to know EAS responsibilities, for their respective cable system, as outlined in each of the listed documents.

Schedules for Required Monthly Tests, along with information on who will originate each test, are established in the Fall of each year for the upcoming calendar year. Cable industry preferences for RMT schedule times should be submitted to the WSECC as early as possible each year, which will be considered in concert with Broadcast preferences in setting the upcoming year's scheduled. RMT schedules can be obtained from the WSECC.

APPENDIX 3

**COLUMBIA BASIN OPERATIONAL AREA
NATIONAL, STATE, AND LOCAL RELAY NETWORK DIAGRAM**

NATIONAL



Columbia Basin Operational Area
Public Alert and Warning System Plan

**MONITORING ASSIGNMENTS FOR ALL STATIONS COLUMBIA BASIN
AREA**

	MANDATORY	FOR MINIMUM	EITHER	FULL PARTICIPATION			
INPUT	1	2	OR	1	2	3	4
SOURCE	WSEM	NWS		KONA LP-1	KORD- FM LP-2	LRN	
FREQUENCY	155.475	162.45		610 AM	102.7	155.82	
LOCATION	OLYMPIA	RATTLESNAKE MT.		TRI- CITIES	TRI- CITIES	TRI- CITIES	
TS LEVEL	NATL 2 STATE 1	LOCAL 1 WEATHER 1 STATE 2 NAT 3		NAT 2 LOCAL 2 WEATHE R 2 STATE 2			

Columbia Basin Operational Area
Public Alert and Warning System Plan

APPENDIX 4

COLUMBIA BASIN OPERATIONAL AREA

ROSTER OF AUTHORIZED ACTIVATING ENTITIES

ORGANIZATION & CONTACT PERSON	OFFICE ADDRESS	PHONE / FAX /EMAIL
Jerome Delvin, Benton County Commissioner	620 Market St Prosser, WA 99350	P:509-736-3080 E: commissioners@co.benton.wa.us
Will McKay, Benton County Commissioner	620 Market St Prosser, WA 99350	P:509-736-3080 E: commissioners@co.benton.wa.us
Michael Alvarez, Benton County Commissioner	620 Market St Prosser, WA 99350	P:509-736-3080 E: commissioners@co.benton.wa.us
Mike Clark, Benton County Sheriff	Benton County Sheriff's Office, 7320 W. Quinault Kennewick, WA 99336	P:509-735- 6555 E: michael.clark@co.benton.wa.us
Deanna Davis, Benton County Emergency Management Manager	651 Truman Ave Richland, WA 99352	P: 509-628-8092 E: d.davis@bces.wa.gov
Kim Lettrick, Communications Manager	651 Truman Ave Richland, WA 99352	P: 509-628-8595 E: k.lettrick@bces.wa.gov
SECOMM Supervisors	651 Truman Ave Richland, WA 99352	P: 509-628-2616

Clint Didier, Franklin County Commissioner	1016 N. 4th Ave Pasco, WA 99301	P: 509- 545-3535 D: 509-546-5853 F: 509-545-3573 E: cdidier@franklincountywa.gov
Rocky Mullen, Franklin County Commissioner	1016 N. 4th Ave Pasco, WA 99301	P: 509-545-3535 D:509-546-5852 F: 509-545-3573 E: rmullen@franklincountywa.gov
Stephen Bauman, Franklin County Commissioner	1016 N. 4th Ave Pasco, WA 99301	P: 509-545-3535 D: 509-546-5851 F: 509-545-3573 E: sbauman@franklincountywa.gov
Jim Raymond, Franklin County Sheriff	1016 N. 4th Ave Pasco, WA 99301	P: 509-545-3501 D:509-545-3560 F: 509-546-5802 E: jraymond@franklincountywa.gov
Sean Davis, Franklin County Emergency Management Director	1011 E. Ainsworth Street Pasco, WA 99301	P: 509-545-3546 D: 509-546-5846 F: 509-545-2139 E: sdavis@franklincountywa.gov

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Todd Kimball, Walla Walla County Commissioner	314 W. Main, 2nd Floor – Room 203 P.O. Box 1506 Walla Walla, WA 99362	P: 509-524-2505 F: 509-524-2512 E: tkimball@wwcowa.gov
Gunner Fulmer, Walla Walla County Commissioner	314 W. Main, 2nd Floor – Room 203 P.O. Box 1506 Walla Walla, WA 99362	P: 509-524-2505 F: 509-524-2512 E: gfulmer@wwcowa.gov
Bertha Clayton, Walla Walla County Commissioner	314 W. Main, 2nd Floor – Room 203 P.O. Box 1506 Walla Walla, WA 99362	P: 509-524-2505 F: 509-524-2512 M: 509-520-3185 E: bclayton@wwcowa.gov
Mark Crider, Walla Walla County Sheriff	240 West Alder Street, First Floor Walla Walla, WA 99362	P: 509-524-5400 F: 509-524-5480 E: mcrider@wwcowa.gov
Chris Lee, Walla Walla Emergency Management Director	27 N. 2nd Walla Walla, WA 99362	P: 509-524-2900 F: 509-524-2910 E: clee@wwcowa.gov
Chris Buttice, Walla Walla City Police Chief, Dispatch (WESCOM) Director	54 E. Moore Walla Walla, WA 99362	P: 509 527-3750 F: 509 525-5057 E: cbuttice@wallawallawa.gov
Esther Duncan, Dispatch (WESCOM) Manager	27 N. 2nd Walla Walla, WA 99362	P: 509 527-1960 F: 509 527-3263 E: eduncan@wallawallawa.gov
Heather Lee Walla Walla County Emergency PIO	310 W. Poplar, Suite #008 Walla Walla, WA 99362	P: 509-524-2700 F: 509-524-2703 E: hlee@wwcowa.gov

APPENDIX 5

COLUMBIA BASIN OPERATIONAL AREA

AUTHENTICATION PROCEDURES

To verify requests for activation in the following counties, please call the respective dispatch center at the following numbers:

SECOMM: (509) 628-2616

Walla Walla County Dispatch: (509) 527-1960

Alternate contacts:

National Weather Service: Weather.gov

Pendleton Weather (541) 276-7832 w-pdt.webmaster@noaa.gov

Washington State Duty Officer: (800) 258-5990

Washington State EM Office: (800) 562-6108

Columbia Basin Operational Area
Public Alert and Warning System Plan

APPENDIX 6

**COLUMBIA BASIN OPERATIONAL AREA
EAS EVENT CODES**

Washington State EAS Event Codes Master List

ADR	Administrative Message	FLA	Flood Watch	SVA	Severe Thunderstorm Watch
AVA	Avalanche Watch	FLS	Flood Statement	SVR	Severe Thunderstorm Warning
AVE	Avalanche Warning	FLW	Flood Warning	SVS	Severe Weather Statement
BZW	Blizzard Warning	FRW	Fire Warning	TOA	Tornado Watch
CAE	Child Abduction Emergency	HMW	Hazardous Materials Warning	TOE	911 Telephone Outage Emergency
CDW	Civil Danger Warning	HWA	High Wind Watch	TOR	Tornado Warning
CEM	Civil Emergency Message	HWW	High Wind Warning	TRA	Tropical Storm Watch
CFA	Coastal Flood Watch	LAE	Local Area Emergency	TRW	Tropical Storm Warning
CFW	Coastal Flood Warning	LEW	Law Enforcement Warning	TSA	Tsunami Watch
DMO	Practice/Demo Warning	NIC	National Information Center	TSW	Tsunami Warning
DSW	Dust Storm Warning	NMN	Network Message Notification	VOW	Volcano Warning
EAN	Emergency Action Notification	NPT	National Periodic Test	WSA	Winter Storm Watch
EAT	Emergency Action Termination	NUW	Nuclear Power Plant Warning	WSW	Winter Storm Warning
EQW	Earthquake Warning	RHW	Radiological Hazard Warning	SVA	Severe Thunderstorm Watch
EVI	Evacuation Immediate	RMT	Required Monthly Test	SVR	Severe Thunderstorm Warning
FFA	Flash Flood Watch	RWT	Required Weekly Test		
FFS	Flash Flood Statement	SPW	Shelter In Place Warning		
FFW	Flash Flood Warning	SMW	Special Marine Warning		

APPENDIX 7

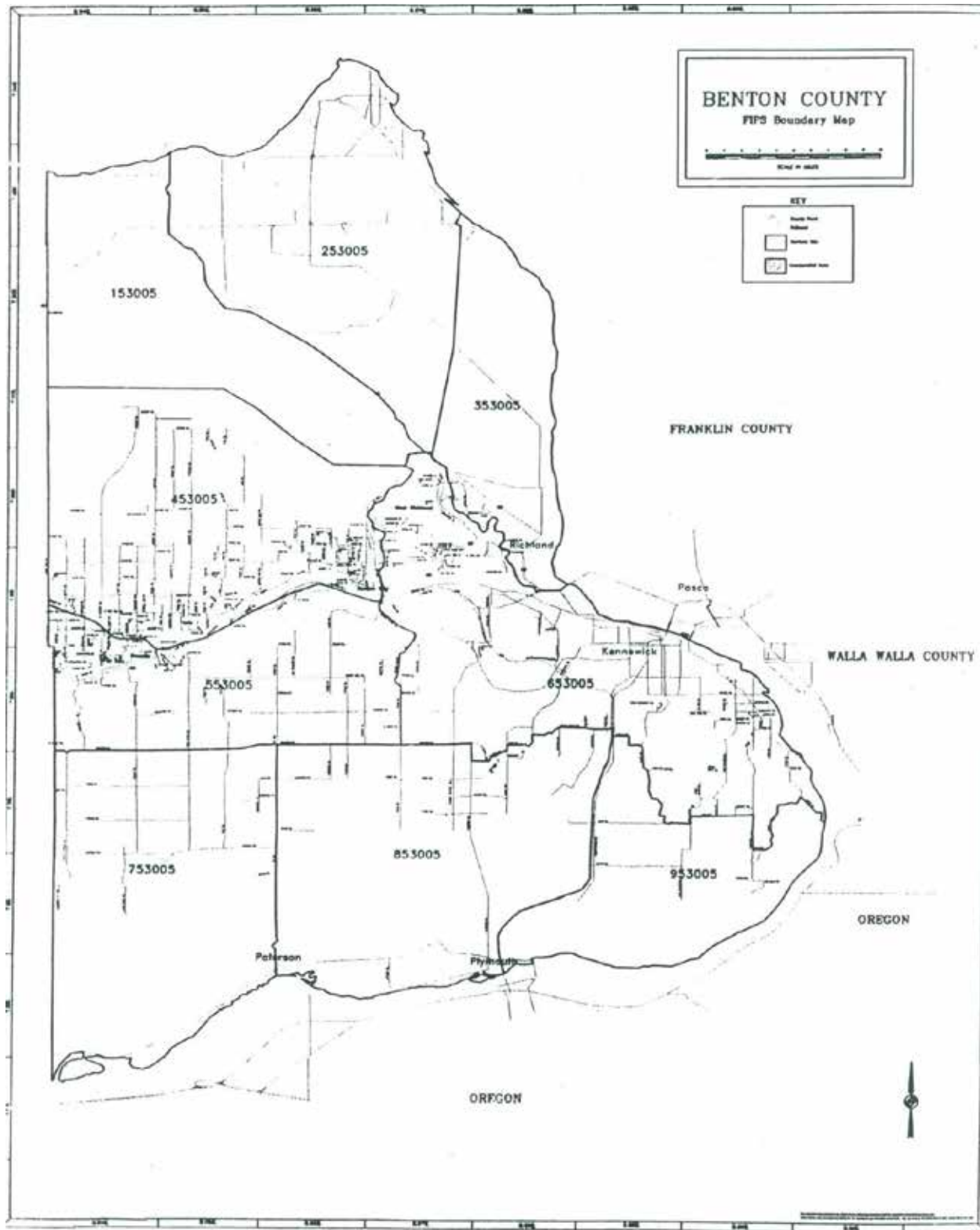
COLUMBIA BASIN OPERATIONAL AREA

COUNTY SUBDIVISION MAPS AND DESCRIPTIONS

BENTON COUNTY 053005

AREA #	DESCRIPTION OF BOUNDARIES
0	No designation. Selects the entire county.
153005	North boundary is the Columbia River. East boundary is Highway 24. South boundary is the ALE Road. West boundary is Benton County Line.
253005	North boundary is the Columbia River. East boundary is Route 2 south of the Columbia River. South boundary is Highway 240. West boundary is Highway 24.
353005	The north and east boundaries are the Columbia River. The south boundary is I-182 and the Yakima River. The west boundary is Route 2.
453005	The north boundary is ALE Road. The east boundary is the Yakima River. The south boundary is I-82. The west boundary is Benton-Yakima County line.
553005	The north boundary is I-82. The east boundary is Webber Canyon Road. The south boundary is Sellards Road. The west boundary is the Benton-Yakima County line.
653005	The north boundary is I-182. The east boundary is the Columbia River. The south boundary is Sellards, Clodfelter, Locust Grove, Bateman, Beck Kirk and Meals Roads. The west boundary is Webber and Travis Roads.
753005	The north boundary is Sellards Road. The east boundary is Highway 221. The south boundary is the Columbia River. The west boundary is the Yakima-Benton County line.
853005	The north boundary is Sellards Road. The east boundary is I-82. The south boundary is the Columbia River. The west boundary is Highway 221.
953005	The north boundary is Bateman, Beck, Kirk, and Meals Roads. The east boundary is the Columbia River. The south boundary is the Columbia River and the west boundary is I-82.

Columbia Basin Operational Area
Public Alert and Warning System Plan

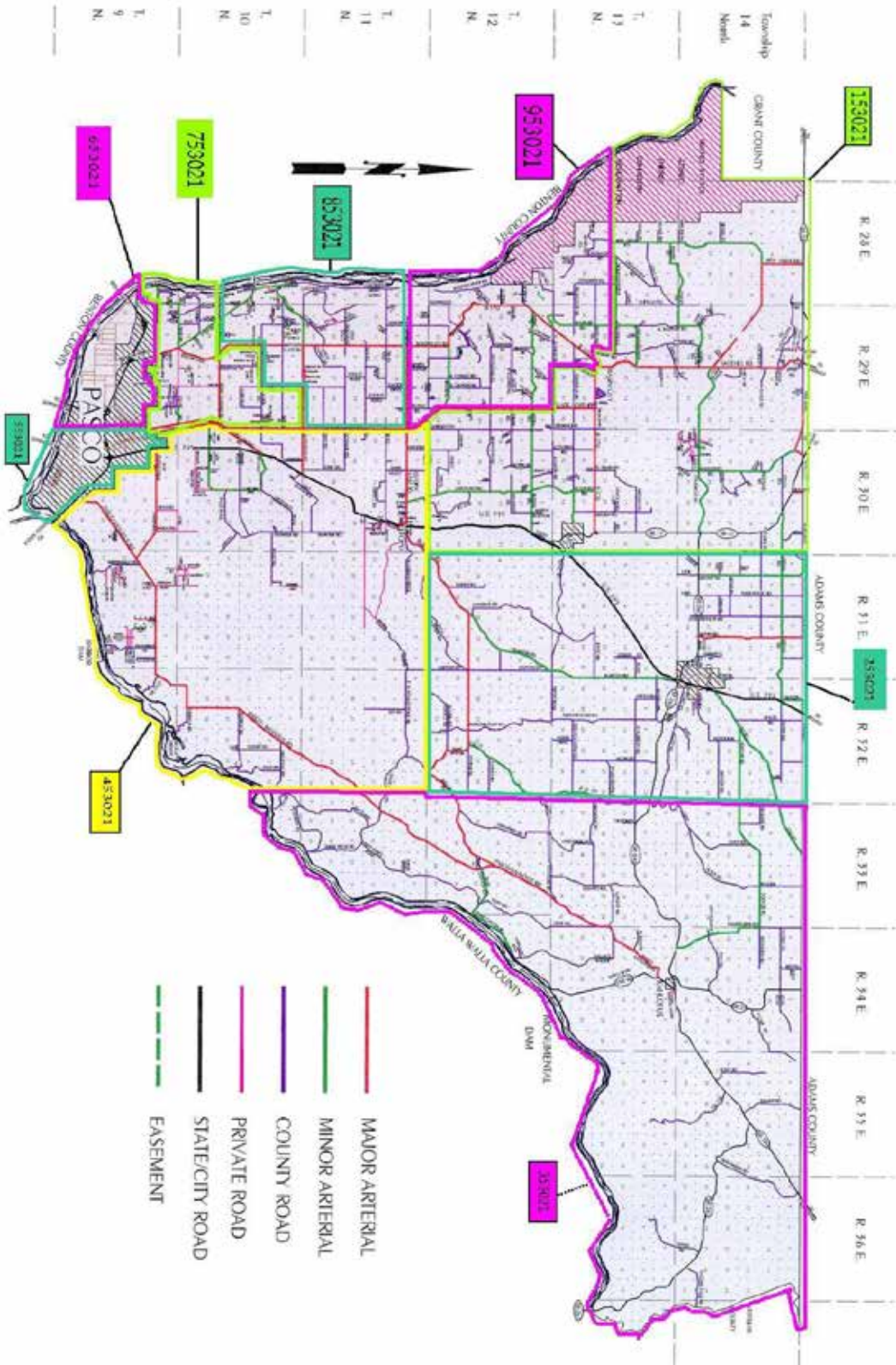


Columbia Basin Operational Area
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Franklin County 053021

AREA #	DESCRIPTION OF BOUNDARIES
053021	No designation. Selects the entire county.
153021	North boundary is the Adams County Line. East boundary is the Range 30 east line. South boundary is the Township 11 North line to Glade North, W. Klamath to Sagehill, Hollingsworth to the Columbia River. West boundary is the Columbia River.
253021	North boundary is the Adams County Line. East boundary is the Range 32 East line. South boundary is the Township 11 North line. West boundary is the Range 30 East line.
353021	North boundary is the Adams County line. East boundary is the Whitman County line. South boundary is the Snake River. West boundary is the Range 32 East line.
453021	North boundary is the Township 11 North line. East boundary is the range 32 East line. South boundary is the Snake River and the Pasco City limits. West boundary is the Range 29 East line.
553021	North boundary is the Pasco City limits. West boundary is 20th Avenue. South boundary is the Columbia River. East boundary is the Snake River and the Eastern Pasco City Limits.
653021	North boundary is the Pasco City limits. East boundary is 20th Avenue. South boundary is the Columbia River. West boundary is the Columbia River.
753021	North boundary is Selph Landing to Taylor Flats, Alder to Dayton, Sagemoor to Range 29 East. East boundary is Range 29 East. South boundary is the Pasco City limits. West boundary is the Columbia River.
853021	North boundary is Eltopia West Road. East boundary is Range 29 East. South boundary is Range 29 East to Sagemoor, Dayton to Alder, Taylor Flats to Selph Landing, to the Columbia River. West boundary is the Columbia River.
953021	North boundary is Hollingsworth from the Columbia River to Sagehill. East boundary is Sagehill to W. Klamath, Glade North to Eltopia West. South boundary is Eltopia West. West boundary is the Columbia River.

Columbia Basin Operational Area Public Alert and Warning System Plan



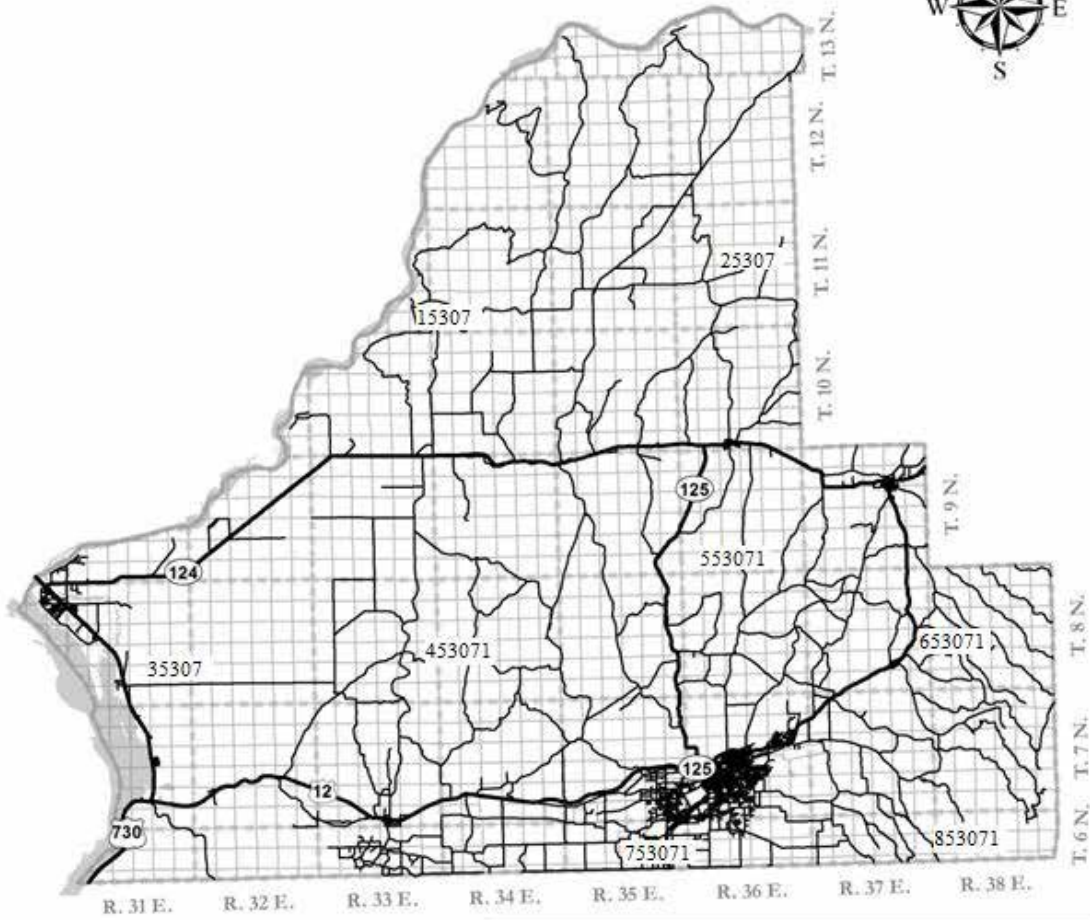
Walla Walla County 053071

Columbia Basin Operational Area
Public Alert and Warning System Plan

AREA #	DESCRIPTION OF BOUNDARIES
0	No designation. Selects the entire county.
153071	The north boundary is the Snake River. The east boundary is Magellan Road, Smith Springs Road, Piper Canyon Road. The south border is Highway 124. The west boundary is the Snake River.
253071	The north boundary is the Snake River. The east boundary is the Columbia County line. The south boundary is Highway 124. The west boundary is Magellan Road, Smith Springs Road, Piper Canyon Road.
353071	The north boundary is the Snake River and Highway 124. East boundary is the Touchet River Road. The south boundary is the Oregon border. The west boundary is the Columbia River.
453071	The north boundary is Highway 124. The east boundary is Ireland Road, Loney Road and Highway 125. The south boundary is the Oregon border. The west boundary is the Touchet River Road
553071	The north boundary is Highway 124 to the Columbia County line. The east boundary is the Columbia County line, Walker Road, and Highway 12. The south border is Smith Road and Valley Grove Road. The west border is Highway 125.
653071	The north boundary is the Columbia County border. The east boundary is the Columbia County line. The south boundary is Black Snake Ridge Road and Spring Creek Road. The west boundary is Highway 12, Walker Road.
753071	The north boundary is Loney Road, Valley Grove Road, and Smith Road. The east boundary is Burocker Road, 5 Mile Road and Foster Road. The south boundary is the Oregon border. The west boundary is Locher Road, Foster Road and Ireland Road.
853071	The north boundary is Spring Creek Road and Black Snake Ridge Road. The east border is the Columbia County line. The southern boundary is the Oregon border. The west boundary is Foster Road, 5 Mile Road and Burocker Road.
9	None designated per Emergency Management

Columbia Basin Operational Area
Public Alert and Warning System Plan

Walla Walla County Map



Legend

- STATE HIGHWAYS
- PUBLIC ROADS
- SECTION BOUNDARIES
- TOWNSHIP BOUNDARIES
- RIVERS



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APPENDIX 8

COLUMBIA BASIN OPERATIONAL AREA

**WASHINGTON STATE
EAS REQUIRED MONTHLY TEST
COLUMBIA BASIN AREA EAS 20xx RMT SCHEDULE
(SECC Approved xx/xx/xx)
CURRENT SCHEDULE PROVIDE UPON REQUEST**

D/N	MONTH (SS)	DATE	DAY	TIME	ORIGINATOR
D	JAN (xxxx)				
N	FEB (xxxx)				
D	MAR (xxxx)				
N	APR (xxxx)				
D	MAY (xxxx)				
N	JUN (xxxx)				
D	JUL (xxxx)				
N	AUG (xxxx)				
N	SEP (xxxx)				
D	OCT (xxxx)				
D	NOV (xxxx)				
N	DEC (xxxx)				

D = Daytime activation (8:30 AM to local sunset) N = Nighttime activation (local sunset to 8:30 AM)

(SS) = Local sunset. Based on Prosser's (western-most location in EAS Area) sunset time and incorporates daylight savings times, as appropriate.

Columbia Basin Operational Area
Public Alert and Warning System Plan

Approval of April 2026 Update

The Managers/Directors of the Benton, Franklin, and Walla Walla County Emergency Management Agencies/Departments approve of the changes to this plan made in April of 2026 as recorded in the record of changes.

X 

Deanna Davis
Manager, BCEM

X 

Sean Davis
Director, FCEM
Signed by: 4dda678f-4909-4738-8030-8b6ba96135c9

X 

Chris Lee
Director, WWEM