

VERMONT DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND HOMELAND SECURITY  
NEWS RELEASE

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Emergency Notification System Launched in Vermont

Vermont Alert Allows Vermonters to Stay Informed and Prepared

WATERBURY, VT - Vermonters have a new tool at their disposal to stay informed of pending disasters, weather conditions, public health notifications, and countless other alerts that could affect themselves or their loved ones.

Vermont Alert ([www.vtalert.gov](http://www.vtalert.gov)) is a free service for users. It allows the public to sign up and receive notifications through a number of delivery systems, including text, e-mail, telephone, or even a game console. Vermont Alert is hosted and maintained by the Vermont Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security (VT DEMHS) and is available to all emergency response agencies in the state in order to allow for localized alerts.

"We've seen over the past couple of years the value of speedy and accurate information as emergency situations develop," Gov. Peter Shumlin said. "This new system will give Vermonters a head start in preparing for storms or other hazardous conditions."

Users will create accounts, then chose their local area and what types of alerts they wish to receive, as well as which delivery system they prefer.

For example, you can receive weather advisories as they are issued from the National Weather Service. Local fire, police, and other local emergency responders will soon be able to issue alerts.

"We have worked long and hard to bring Vermont Alert to fruition," Vermont Division of Emergency Management and Homeland Security Director Joe Flynn said. "This provides not only the state, but local responders with another tool to mitigate the effects of disasters on Vermont and its citizenry - at no direct cost to those local response organizations."

Vermont Alert is modeled after New York Alert, which has been in operation since 2006, and was designed by the state of New York. Vermont paid \$58,000 for the system.

Local jurisdictions will receive training on the system throughout the coming months.

Sign up for an account today by visiting [www.vtalert.gov](http://www.vtalert.gov).

For more information contact VT DEMHS Public Information Officer Mark Bosma at [800-347-0488](tel:8003470488).

Examples of use:

- There is a large structure fire in a downtown. The local fire department can write and distribute a press release through VT Alert. Can contact the public directly with an evacuation notice (phone, text, or e-mail), issue a travel alert for motorists to avoid the area, and alert the public of any public health hazards from smoke.

- A wildfire is burning. Nearby towns can issue evacuation orders and notify residents in the affected area directly (via phone, text, or e-mail). Press releases can be written on and distributed through Vermont Alert and the National Weather Service can issue an Air Quality warning if the fire warrants such a notification.
- An accident on Interstate-91 is blocking the road. The State Police can write and distribute a press release regarding the accident. The Agency of Transportation can issue a travel advisory and outline alternate routes. VTrans can then notify the public when the road has re-opened.
- A tropical storm is occurring in Vermont.
  - o In the state Emergency Operations Center VT DEMHS and partners can:
    - § Prepare and release Emergency Alert System messages.
    - § Prepare and distribute press releases and special notifications regarding conditions
    - § Post state road closures
    - § Post public health alerts
    - § Post locations of emergency shelters
    - § Automatically populate social media with information above
    - § The National Weather Service can issue storm Watches and Warnings
  - o Local communities can:
    - § Issue evacuation warnings
    - § Post local road closures
    - § Post public health alerts
- In the aftermath of a storm the state and federal government can post notifications about disaster aid to individuals and communities.

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