

WASHTENAW ALERT: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS WASHTENAW ALERT?

The Washtenaw Alert Emergency Notification System is a communications service public officials in Washtenaw County use to quickly notify citizens of emergency situations and other events which the public needs to be made aware of. It enables officials to provide emergency notifications quickly and easily. This service is free to all residents and businesses located within Washtenaw County.

WHY SHOULD I SIGN UP FOR ALERT NOTIFICATIONS?

Washtenaw Alert allows officials to provide critical information directly to you as emergencies happen. The alerts provide information on where to go, what to do and how to stay informed through text message, email, cell phone, home phone or work phone, according to the severity of the incident.

WHAT ALERTS AND NOTIFICATIONS WILL I RECEIVE?

You can receive alerts about: Severe weather, drinking water contamination, evacuation or shelter-in-place notices, missing persons, fires or floods, bomb threats, hostage situations, chemical spills or gas leaks, and other emergency incidents where rapid and accurate notification is essential for life safety. Traffic advisories are also issued to inform you of road closures, along with various other community related messages.

Community Messages: These are general community alerts which include crime bulletins, requests for public assistance, and other outreach communications regarding your area. These messages are sent via email.

Public Advisories: Text message and email alerts for ongoing incidents or significant events which have recently occurred and which you should be generally aware of. These notifications may or may not require action on your part.

Emergencies Only: Phone, text, and email alerts for in-progress situations which require your immediate attention. These messages will include the type of incident, the area impacted, and the actions you need to take for your safety.

Traffic Advisories: Notification of unplanned road closures and other traffic-related incidents which may impact your travel. These messages are sent countywide and are primarily related to freeways, however local closure of major secondary roads are also included as necessary.

Weather Alerts: You will be notified of the National Weather Service watches, warnings, and/or advisories which you select.

WHO CAN REGISTER FOR WASHTENAW ALERT?

Anyone can register for Washtenaw Alert. Whether you live, work, travel through, or have family/friends in Washtenaw County the service is available to you. However, only addresses

within Washtenaw County will receive an alert from the system. Individuals and businesses that have their information available in the white and yellow pages are already included in the system and will receive emergency notifications through landline only.

HOW WILL I RECEIVE ALERTS?

Notifications and updates are sent to landline phones, cell phones, and e-mail accounts according to the nature of the incident. In the event of an emergency, natural or man-made, the county will be able to send important alerts and updates directly to residents if they choose to create a Washtenaw Alert account.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I RECEIVE A WASHTENAW ALERT MESSAGE?

Follow the directions that are communicated within the alert, and use the information provided to make timely decisions regarding your personal safety and security. Updates will be sent if and when more information becomes available.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I DON'T RECEIVE A MESSAGE?

Your area of the community may not be affected. In which case, you won't receive a notification even if it's only a block away. Only residents in the immediate area who are requested to take action will receive a notification.

WHAT WEATHER ALERTS CAN I RECEIVE?

Washtenaw Alerts will automatically notify residents when severe weather conditions are possible or already occurring in the area. You can choose which weather events to be notified of (tornadoes, severe thunderstorms, flooding, winter weather, high winds, extreme temperatures) and which type of event (warning, watch, or advisory.) We recommend that you choose all alert types unless you have specific needs or are familiar with the products.

Weather Alerts will notify you when an alert has been issued for your area based upon the address(es) registered on your Washtenaw Alert account. A .pdf file of the National Weather Service text and graphics will be attached to email notifications, and a link to the full message is included with text notifications. The system also offers a "Quiet Time" option which enables you to limit the times you receive weather alerts, excluding Tornado Warnings.

IS THERE A WASHTENAW ALERT APP?

There is a free app for Android and iPhone users, however you must already have a registered Washtenaw Alert account to use it. Search Google Play or the Apple Store for Everbridge and select the "Everbridge" app. Once you download the App, simply log in with your username and password to activate.

HOW DO I REGISTER?

You can sign up for Washtenaw Alert by visiting this link: <https://www.washtenaw.org/alerts>

- Click the SIGN-UP button
- Enter a Username (use a name you will easily remember, like your email)
- Enter a password and answer the security question

- Next enter your home address so that you can receive alerts for your specific location. Click to verify your address and then confirm this is your location.
- Click to create your account. You will then be asked additional questions to complete your profile.
- Select your time zone (GMT-05:00 Eastern Standard Time America/New York)
- Next enter the telephone numbers and email addresses which you would like to receive alerts.
- Next, select the types of alert messages you would like to receive. Click the > to see all available options and then check the boxes to select which alerts to send you.
- Review all of your information and then confirm your settings by clicking finish at the bottom of the page.

CAN I RECEIVE ALERTS FOR MORE THAN ONE LOCATION?

Yes, it is possible to receive alerts for more than one location in Washtenaw County! You can be notified for your work address, family or relatives, or other areas of concern to you! Log in to your account and find the My Locations section near the bottom of the page, then click Edit. Click Add Location, enter the appropriate information, click to verify the address, then save the location. You can enter up to 5 addresses total on your account.

WHAT IF I DON'T WANT TO ENTER MY HOME ADDRESS?

A valid address in Washtenaw County is required. Providing an address enables us to send targeted information specific to a geographic location, such as your home, work, or school. If you are not comfortable entering your home address, you may use the address of a local school, post office, public building, or any valid street address closest to your home or place of work.

CAN I REGISTER WITH AN ADDRESS OUTSIDE OF WASHTENAW COUNTY?

No. Washtenaw Alert only issues alerts for Washtenaw County and does not allow addresses outside of the county to be subscribed. If you live or work outside of the county, you're encouraged to sign-up for that respective jurisdiction's alerting system as well.

WHAT IF MY PHONE NUMBER OR ADDRESSES CHANGE?

The system is only as good as the information you provide. Once you have registered to receive notifications, it is important that you keep your profile current. If your contact information changes, please remember to update your information in your profile.

WHO SENDS WASHTENAW ALERT MESSAGES?

Messages are sent by various public safety agencies and government offices in Washtenaw County depending on the nature and location of the incident.

WILL MY CONTACT INFORMATION BE SHARED?

Absolutely not. The information that you provide will be used for Washtenaw Alert notification purposes only. We will not distribute or sell your contact or location information to any vendor or other organization.

WHY IS WASHTENAW ALERT NOT ALLOWING ME TO REGISTER A USERNAME?

The Washtenaw Alert system uses the national Everbridge network. If someone else has already registered that username you will have to enter a different username and password to register for the system.

HOW OFTEN WILL I RECEIVE ALERT NOTIFICATIONS?

To a large extent, it's up to you. The number of alerts you receive depends on the types of alerts you sign up for, and how often emergencies happen. For example, you may get many messages each week if you sign up for traffic condition alerts. But you may get severe weather alerts far less often. If you feel you are getting too few or too many alerts, you can adjust your alert settings.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE PROBLEMS?

If you believe you have not received messages, wish to change settings on your account, have feedback, or need other assistance related to Washtenaw Alerts, please contact EOC@WashtenawCounty.net