



# STATE OF WISCONSIN

## DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS

### DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Brian M. Satula  
Administrator

Scott Walker  
Governor

For more information contact: Tod Pritchard  
Office: 608-242-3324  
Cell: 608-219-4008

For Immediate Release  
June 14, 2012

## **Cell Phone Users Will Begin Receiving Weather Warnings Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) System goes live next week**

(MADISON) Some cell phone users will begin receiving tornado warnings and other weather emergency notifications on their cell phones beginning next week as part of a national program to expand public warning capabilities.

Under the Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) system, the National Weather Services will send warnings for tornadoes, blizzards, ice storms and flash flooding to cell phone towers. These emergency alerts will be sent to the newer version of cell phones in affected areas. Alerts will continue to be issued or available on other sources including radio/TV stations, on NOAA weather radios and local sirens.

"The Wireless Emergency Alert system is the first part of a national program to alert the public by text messaging," said Wisconsin Emergency Management Administrator Brian Satula. "Later this year, state, tribal and local emergency officials will be able to issue other types of alerts on cell phones such as Amber Alerts for child abduction or evacuation orders during local emergencies."

The alerts will include a unique ring tone and vibration. They will not interrupt any phone calls or downloads in progress. In addition, cell phone users will not be charged for the emergency messaging.

The WEA system is part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Integrated Public Alert and Warning System known as IPAWS. The warnings will go automatically to any newer-model cell phones within range of the cell phone towers. The wireless industry estimates by 2014, most all cell phones on the market will be WEA-capable.

For more information on the WEA system, go to the ReadyWisconsin website at <http://ready.wi.gov/cell/default.asp>

**#End#**