

CANADA'S ALERT READY SYSTEM

Canada's Alert Ready system is a partnership between federal, provincial and territorial emergency management officials, Pelmorex Corporation (The Weather Network), the broadcast industry and now wireless service providers. This system has been sending out emergency alerts to the public since 2015. Wireless emergency alerts are an enhancement to the existing Alert Ready system.

While the emergency alert may look like a text message, it is not a text message.

Emergency alerts are sent via cell broadcast distribution. Cell broadcast is a mobile technology that allows messages to be broadcast to all compatible wireless devices within a designated geographical area.

Cell broadcast is designed for simultaneous message delivery to multiple users in a specified area, and is not affected by network congestion because it uses a dedicated part of the network, separate from that used for traditional voice and data traffic.

In order for emergency alerts to be received on a wireless device, it must:

- be a long-term evolution (LTE) smartphone, which is commonly referred to as "4G LTE";
- be connected to an LTE cellular network at the time the emergency alert is issued; and
- have special software embedded in it to receive messages sent by the service provider in the Alert Ready format.

People in rural and remote communities whose phones do not meet all three requirements will not receive wireless emergency alerts. However, they will still be able to receive alerts through the existing alerting channels, such as radio, cable and satellite television and web feeds.

Questions regarding network accessibility in Manitoba should be directed to wireless service providers.