



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Aspen, Snowmass Village, Pitkin County Launches Pitkin Alert An emergency alert system for email, text messaging, wireless and standard phones.

ASPEN, CO – 02/13/09 – The Aspen - Pitkin County Emergency Telephone Service Authority today announced the launch of Pitkin Alert, a Roam Secure Alert Network™ for emergency notification. Public safety personnel can now quickly and reliably send alerts via email, text messaging, wireless and standard phones. Community members, residents and visitors alike, can sign up for Pitkin Alert by visiting pitkinalert.org.

Participation is voluntary, and a cell phone is not required to benefit from the Pitkin Alert system; users can register email accounts and wired telephones as well. Snowmass Village residents and visitors are asked to sign up for Pitkin County's emergency notification via the Internet at pitkinalert.org; where subscribers can select from preset alert topics, including construction updates/alerts specific to the development taking place in Snowmass Village. Alert options include severe weather advisories, road closures, accident notifications, evacuation notices, construction updates and more. Registered users will only receive messages for information they subscribe to, and the only cost to the end user is the nominal fee wireless carriers charge to receive text messages.

Emergency notifications will be launched through the Aspen - Pitkin County Communications Center for their entire dispatch area, which comprises Pitkin County and portions of Gunnison and Eagle Counties. "With Pitkin Alert dispatchers will be able broadcast emergency messages to many different types of communication devices through an easy-to-use web interface" said Mark Gamrat, Communications Director.

Pitkin County public safety officials have already begun to use the system internally to send text messages to coordinate first responders such as EMS, fire, police and other emergency personnel in the county. “Communities are facing an ever increasing number of emergencies,” said Pitkin County Sheriff Bob Braudis. “Having transparency with the community and pre-planning for emergency responders allows for better management of these emergencies.”

Pitkin Alert was in the final stages of implementation when the Aspen Police Department enacted a mandatory downtown evacuation during the New Year’s Eve 2008 bomb scare. “In our efforts to notify residents of the evacuation zone and shelter location an inadequate number of people were reached,” said Chief of Police Richard Pryor. “We believe the number of notified citizens, in future incidents, will improve with the launch of Pitkin Alert.”

Whether residents and visitors are on the slopes in Aspen or Snowmass, traveling through the area, or on their way home from work they will be kept informed of important emergency information with Pitkin Alert on the Roam Secure Alert Network™.

For media questions, please contact Communications Director Mark Gamrat at 970-920-5310 or Community Relations Specialist Stephanie Dasaro at the Aspen Police Department 970-920-5400. For technical questions or problems with Pitkin Alert, please point your browser to pitkinalert.org or send a message to alerthelp@co.pitkin.co.us.

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