

Important Update About Nuclear Emergency Alerts & Notifications

The primary alert method for emergencies at the Susquehanna Steam Electric Station has been updated to FEMA's IPAWS Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) System effective April 1, 2025. CodeRED and Emergency Alert System (EAS) messages will continue to serve as emergency notification methods.

In the event of a nuclear emergency, you will be alerted in the following ways*:



IPAWS-WEA – IPAWS Wireless Emergency Alert System (WEA) is FEMA's nationwide digital notification system which automatically sends wireless notifications to your cell phone, without the need to download an app or subscribe to a service.



CodeRED – CodeRED is used by Columbia and Luzerne County emergency management agencies (EMAs) for all types of emergencies. It automatically calls public landlines and can also provide notifications via cell phone, text message, and/or email. Messages are received regardless of where you are at the time. It's free to sign up for CodeRED alerts.



EAS Messages – Emergency Alert System (EAS) messages are sent by the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) to local radio and television broadcast stations and to NOAA's Weather Radio by IPAWS EAS.

These systems can reach the public quickly, regardless of where they are located at the time, and provide both alerts and instructions in one step, saving time. By making these updates, all alert and notification methods now match those that have been successfully used for other types of emergencies for some time. Wireless alerts are also used by other utilities for nuclear emergencies. Sirens will no longer be used for nuclear emergencies.



Download the FREE CodeRED App on Your Smartphone or Enroll Online at Your County's EMA Website

Columbia County:

Text "CCEMA19" to 99411, call 570-389-5720, or visit <http://ema.columbiapa.org/codered>

Luzerne County:

Text "LuzerneAlerts" to 99411, call 570-820-4400, or visit <https://www.luzernecounty.org/191/Emergency-Management>



Learn More About IPAWS - WEA

<https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/integrated-public-alert-warning-system>



*A route alerting system provides another backup method for alerts and notifications. It uses vehicles with public address systems canvassing the area and broadcasting messages.

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What is IPAWS-WEA?

The Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) is FEMA's national wireless emergency alert (WEA) system. Similar to an AMBER Alert, it delivers emergency and life-saving information to the public through mobile phones using Wireless Emergency Alerts, to radio and television via the Emergency Alert System (TV and radio), and on NOAA's Weather Radio.

What is CodeRED?

CodeRED is an emergency notification system that provides information to the public via phone, text email, and other digital channels. By default, all listed landline phone numbers on record will receive CodeRED phone calls without the need to enroll. The public can also opt in to receive cell, text, email, and VoIP phone notifications. CodeRED has been used by Luzerne and Columbia counties for a number of years.

Is there a cost to use the CodeRED app or receive notifications from CodeRED and IPAWS-WEA?

No. There is no charge to opt in to or download the CodeRED app, however, standard data/text messaging fees may apply if you opt in for digital mobile alerts. There are no data/messaging charges for alerts sent through the IPAWS-WEA system.

Why make this change? Is this being done to save money?

This decision is not driven by cost, but rather how we can best protect the public. IPAWS and CodeRED are established systems that have been successfully used in our community for a number of years. They offer greater functionality and reach because they can notify and provide instructions at the same time. They can also reach you even when you are not home (you don't need to be near a siren to be notified). Because they provide a consistent message, they also eliminate confusion over what type of emergency is occurring and what steps should be taken.

Was this change approved?

The change was approved by FEMA and the NRC. Susquehanna emergency plan partners, including local, county, state, and federal EMAs were involved in the decision and are supportive. FEMA also hosted a public meeting regarding this update.

I turn my cell phone off/sound off at night. How will I be reached?

IPAWS-WEA messages may not be heard; however, the landline calls from CodeRED will come through. CodeRED calls to cell phones can be set to override silent mode and do not disturb mode on most cell phones.

I don't always carry my cell phone. How will I know if there is an emergency?

In an emergency, CodeRED automatically calls all listed landlines (in addition to the other wireless and electronic notifications it makes). Emergency Alert System Radio and TV stations also broadcast messages.

What if wireless service fails in an emergency?

Apart from wireless messages, CodeRED calls all listed landlines, and the Emergency Alert System broadcasts messages on radio and TV. As another form of backup, a route alerting system, where vehicles broadcast messages as they canvass an area, is available.

Was the public notified of this change?

Both IPAWS-WEA and CodeRED have been in use for emergencies for some time. FEMA set up and publicized a public meeting in May 2024. They also held a public meeting following an emergency drill. The information is also included in Susquehanna's emergency brochure, on Susquehanna's website, and county EMA websites.

When is the change effective?

The change was effective April 1, 2025.

What will happen to the sirens?

Following a transition period, sirens will no longer be used for nuclear emergencies. Susquehanna will continue to monitor the sirens, and any issues can continue to be directed to its Emergency Preparedness team. Contact information is listed on the Emergency Planning page of the Susquehanna website, www.susquehannanuclear.com.

Are local fire companies and other groups still able to use the non-nuclear sirens?

They are still available; however, the feedback received was that most of these groups now utilize other methods both for public notification and to alert their volunteers of an emergency.

Who do I contact with questions?

Inquiries can be directed to your county's Emergency Management Agency or Susquehanna's Emergency Preparedness team. Contact information is available on their websites.