



VC ALERT EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

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1. What is VC Alert?

VC Alert is an emergency notification system that may be used to deliver alerts when there is a threat to the health or safety of residents. Residents may also sign up to receive community alerts.

2. What is the intended use of the system?

Emergency Alerts = Evacuation notices, hazardous materials incidents, community policing (AMBER alerts, endangered missing adults, investigative canvassing, prisoner escapes, search for outstanding suspects), public health alerts (boil water alerts, biting animal alerts, infectious disease outbreak, heat and cold advisories to vulnerable populations), severe weather, and any other threat to the health or safety of residents

Community Alerts = Non-emergency police and fire information, community event information, utility notifications, public meetings, and public works projects/road closures

3. What are the system capabilities?

VC Alert has the ability to contact thousands of residents instantly via home telephone number, cellular telephone number, business telephone number, email address, text messaging, facsimile, and instant messaging.

4. What is the message delivery rate?

Approximately 100,000 simultaneous telephonic calls, text messages and emails per hour.



5. Who can activate VC Alert?

Local Municipalities = City of Camarillo, City of Fillmore, City of Moorpark, City of Ojai, City of Oxnard, City of Port Hueneme, City of Santa Paula, City of Simi Valley, City of Thousand Oaks, City of Ventura

County Agencies = Ventura County Behavioral Health Department, Ventura County Executive Office, Ventura County General Services Agency, Ventura County Human Services Agency, Ventura County Public Health Department, Ventura County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services

Law Enforcement = City of Oxnard Police Department, City of Santa Paula Police Department, City of Simi Valley Police Department, City of Ventura Police Department, Ventura County Sheriff's Office

Fire Agencies = City of Fillmore Fire Department, City of Oxnard Fire Department, City of Santa Paula Fire Department, City of Ventura Fire Department, Ventura County Fire Department

6. How does the system work?

Officials may issue an emergency notification through VC Alert about a potential safety hazard or concern. VC Alert contacts thousands of residents instantly by phone, text, email, fax and instant messaging. Recipients may receive instructions for safety precautions or evacuation. If the recipient does not confirm receipt of the message, the system may continue trying to contact them until it receives a confirmation.

It is important for residents not to rely on VC Alert as their only means of emergency information. The system may be used in conjunction with information provided to the media, directions given by emergency responders, and information posted on official city, county and government websites.



7. Where do the telephone numbers in the database come from?

VC Alert utilizes commercially available phone data as a core source of contact information. This includes all listed landline telephone numbers and some cellular telephone numbers and some Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) telephone numbers.

8. What number will appear on Caller ID?

VC Alert enables the agency sending the alert to specify the number that appears on Caller ID.

9. Which cities are participating?

City of Camarillo, City of Fillmore, City of Moorpark, City of Ojai, City of Oxnard, City of Port Hueneme, City of Santa Paula, City of Simi Valley, City of Thousand Oaks, City of Ventura, and the unincorporated areas of Ventura County

10. How do I register?

Please register online to:

- Select to receive messages regarding non-emergency police and fire information, community event information, utility notifications, public meetings, and public works projects/road closures;
- Choose the additional locations you want to be contacted about – such as your parents' home, your workplace and your child's school;
- Receive alerts on your home phone, cell phone, work phone, email, text, fax or instant messaging.

Website: www.vcalert.org

Please contact the Ventura County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services for questions regarding registration.

Email: vcalert@ventura.org

Telephone: (805) 648-9283



11. What if your contact information changes?

You may update your contact information online by visiting www.vcalert.org.

12. Can residents request to have their information removed from the system?

Yes, residents may request to be removed from the VC Alert database by visiting www.vcalert.org.

13. What if I registered for Reverse 911®?

The VC Alert system administrator will be transferring all of the data from the Reverse 911® database into the VC Alert database. However, it is still important to register for VC Alert so that you may:

- Select to receive messages regarding non-emergency police and fire information, community event information, utility notifications, public meetings, and public works projects/road closures;
- Choose the additional locations you want to be contacted about – such as your parents' home, your workplace and your child's school;
- Receive alerts on your home phone, cell phone, work phone, email, text, fax or instant messaging.

14. How much does VC Alert cost?

VC Alert is a free service provided to the public by the Ventura County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services and participating cities.

15. Who pays for the system?

The cost to implement the VC Alert Emergency Notification System in 2012 was \$97,900, which was paid for through the State Homeland Security Grant Program.



The cost for the next four-years (2013-2016) will be \$85,400 per year, which will be divided equally amongst the participating cities based on their percentage of the total residential telephone numbers.

16. Will residents get charged for alerts to their cellular phone?

Call and text messaging charges may apply when you receive alerts, depending on your cellular provider and calling plan. The County of Ventura is not responsible for any charges that may be incurred as a result of receiving these alerts.

17. Does the system have the ability to send alerts in multiple languages?

VC Alert can send a notification in any language that is written or spoken by the agency distributing the alert. The VC Alert text-to-speech engine accommodates twelve languages: Danish, English (U.S. and U.K.), German, Italian, Japanese, Norwegian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish (Europe and Latin America) and Swedish.

18. Does the system accept TTY/TDD Telephone numbers?

The VC Alert system can send alerts to TTY/TDD devices. Those persons utilizing these devices are required to register the phone number associated with their TTY device via our opt in port located at www.vcalert.org.

19. Who is the current vendor for VC Alert?

The current vendor for VC Alert is Everbridge, a leading emergency notification system provider. Organizations in more than 100 countries rely on Everbridge for their emergency notification and day-to-day communication needs. For more information about Everbridge, please visit www.everbridge.com.



20. How did you choose the current VC Alert vendor?

Eleven emergency notification system providers submitted information in response to a Request for Proposal (RFP) sent out by the Ventura County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Service. Everbridge was chosen by the Ventura County Emergency Notification System Users Group based on a number of specific criteria.

21. Where can I get more information?

Website: www.vcalert.org

Email: vc.alert@ventura.org

Call: (805) 648-9283
