

# Lac La Biche County *Policy*

**TITLE:** Emergency Public Communications

**POLICY NO:** ADM-15-004

**RESOLUTION:** 20.361

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** May 5, 2020

**DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBLE:** Communications

**NEXT REVIEW DATE:** May 5, 2022

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## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Lac La Biche County is committed to effective and timely communication during emergencies and other unforeseen situations. The County will use a contracted service provider to share important messages about such situations directly with stakeholders through email, text messages and voice calls, taking residents' diverse communication preferences, information needs and privacy considerations into account.

## **DEFINITIONS:**

- "Emergency" means a situation with the potential to threaten lives or property.
- "Non-emergency situation" means a situation that is not expected to threaten lives or property, but that may still be communicated through the County's contracted service provider (e.g. unplanned facility closure).
- "Stakeholder" means anyone who may receive notifications from the County through its contracted service provider.

## **PRINCIPLES:**

- Information shared will be accurate, timely and directed to the stakeholders who are likely to be affected by situations.
- County staff members who are authorized users of the contracted service provider will exercise sound judgment in when and how to share information through the service.

"Original Signed"  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Administrative Officer

May 27, 2020  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

"Original Signed"  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

May 27, 2020  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**SPECIAL NOTES/CROSS REFERENCE:** Emergency Public Communications Procedure ADM-15-004

**AMENDMENT DATE:** N/A

# Procedure

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## GENERAL GUIDELINES:

The purpose of this procedure is to supplement the corresponding Emergency Public Communications Policy, providing guidelines for consistency and effectiveness.

## DEFINITIONS:

*See definitions listed in Emergency Public Communications Policy.*

## PROCEDURE:

### 1. Emergency Situations:

For the purposes of this policy/procedure, the following situations will be considered emergencies:

- Large urban fires, industrial fires or wildfires with potential to threaten the public
- Dangerous weather events (ice storm, tornado, etc.)
- Incidents of crime with potential to threaten the public (active shooter, etc.)
- Any other situation which, in the opinion of authorized users of the County's contracted service provider, may pose a significant threat to lives and property.

### 2. Non-Emergency Situations:

For the purposes of this policy/procedure, the following situations are considered non-emergencies but may be communicated through the County's contracted service provider, at the discretion of authorized users:

- Unplanned facility closures\*
- Utility service interruptions (water main break, etc.) with potential to impact large numbers of residents or to last for extended periods of time\*\*
- Significant local road or highway closures\*\*
- Public health advisories and drinking water notices\*\*
- Fire bans and fire-related restrictions in effect in Lac La Biche County's area of operation

*\*\*May be considered emergency situations, depending on scope and duration.*

### 3. Stakeholder Notifications:

Notifications regarding situations will be provided to all subscribed stakeholders in affected areas, as defined by authorized users of the County's contracted service provider.

In order to notify as many stakeholders as possible, notifications will be provided through email, text messages and voice calls, and information will also be shared on the County's website and social media pages as appropriate.

Subscribing to notifications regarding emergency situations will be automatic upon registering with the County's contracted service provider.

It will be optional for stakeholders to subscribe to notifications regarding unplanned facility closures, utility service interruptions, road closures, public health advisories and drinking water notices, and fire restrictions.

#### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

The following staff members will be authorized users of the County's contracted service provider:

- Communications department
- Director of Emergency Management
- Deputy Director of Emergency Management
- Manager, Enforcement Services

Communications department staff will have authority to review, authorize and issue messages regarding non-emergency situations, in consultation with managers and senior managers of affected areas of operation.

For emergency situations, the following staff members will have authority to review, authorize and issue certain types of messages:

- Manager, Enforcement Services (or designate) – *Incidents of crime*
- Director of Emergency Management or Deputy Director of Emergency Management – *Large fires, dangerous weather events, incidents of crime*
- Communications staff – *All emergency situations, in consultation with the Manager of Enforcement Services, the Director of Emergency Management and/or the Deputy Director of Emergency Management*

The Chief Administrative Officer, the Communications department and the manager(s) or senior manager(s) of affected areas of operation must be informed of planned emergency notifications, whenever feasible. In emergency situations where threats to life and property are immediate, it may be necessary to proceed without approval from these parties, in which cases a copy of the information must be distributed to them as soon as possible.

Following the issuance of any emergency notification, the staff member(s) responsible for it, the Communications department and required managers or senior managers will review the situation to gauge the necessity of the notification, its effectiveness and other considerations.

"Original Signed"

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Administrative Officer

May 27, 2020

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**SPECIAL NOTES/CROSS REFERENCE:** Emergency Public Communications Policy ADM-15-004

**AMENDMENT DATE:** N/A

