

Action Plan

Category 9 - Flood Emergency Planning, Response and Recovery

Action 9.1 – Implement an early severe weather warning system



Overview and Implementation Strategy:

The action calls for the implementation of an early severe weather warning system which can be used to alert residents of potentially impacts to life and property before they occur. The District of Columbia currently utilizes a centralized warning system – AlertDC – to communicate ongoing impacts with relevant stakeholders, including District residents. The Flood Task Force can leverage the existing system managed by the DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency as an early warning system if a Standard Operating Plan (SOP) with set thresholds and key messaging is developed and implemented.

Impacted City Ward/ANC:

Ward 1-8

Lead Agency:

DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency

Potential Supporting Agencies, Roles/Commitments:

- The Executive Office of the Mayor’s Communications Team plays a role in the review and approval of public messaging. The warning system framework developed through this action plan would potentially require review and approval prior to implementation.
- Key District stakeholders, including DC Water, DC Department of General Services, DC Department of Public Work, and DC Office of Unified Communications, will be included in the messaging development process for this action. Additional agencies may choose to centralize their messaging through AlertDC and will therefore have an active role in the implementation of this action plan.

Background:

Impact of this Effort on Task Force Goal:

The development and implementation of a standardized early warning process within the AlertDC framework would support the planning phase of the emergency management preparedness cycle. The warning system, through proper socialization, will allow for residents to be prepared to secure life and property with adequate communication funneled from key District stakeholders. The more time residents have to prepare as individuals, the better prepared we are as a District to mitigate the impacts of severe weather and flood events.

Centralized Alert Systems in the District of Columbia:

- AlertDC is only one of several alert systems which currently operate in the District of Columbia. The table below provides more information on the types of alerts residents may receive during a severe weather event.

Warning System	Owning Agency
Alert DC	Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Alert Issuing Agency: HSEMA/EOM

Action Plan

Category 9 - Flood Emergency Planning, Response and Recovery

Action 9.1 – Implement an early severe weather warning system



Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)	Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Alert Issuing Agency: HSEMA
Emergency Alert System (EAS)	Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Federal Communications Commission (FCC) National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio	NOAA/National Weather Service
National Warning System (NAWAS)	Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

Equity

How does this action assist vulnerable communities?

The early warning system allows residents in vulnerable communities to forward prepare for the impacts of severe weather and flood events. The better equipped residents are to secure their property with adequate notice, the less likely they are to face the financial or livelihood impacts of damage from severe weather.

Action Plan

Category 9 - Flood Emergency Planning, Response and Recovery

Action 9.1 – Implement an early severe weather warning system



Timeline:

Fiscal Year	Responsible Agency	Action
2023	DC HSEMA	Assess current AlertDC messaging framework. Work with the DC Flood Task Force to determine key stakeholders messaging and messaging for different forms of severe weather.
2024	DC HSEMA	Finalize severe weather/flood-specific messaging SOP; socialize to DC HSEMA Operations leadership and DC Flood Task Force stakeholders. Implement severe weather/flood-specific SOP.
2025	DC HSEMA	Review period for use of the severe weather/flood-specific messaging SOP.

Budget:

Total Estimated Cost: HSEMA pays for AlertDC through a shared Everbridge contract managed by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. As the annual subscription is already fulfilled through HSEMA, there would be no additional cost to use AlertDC as the n

•

Long Term Budget Requirements: The integration of early severe warnings into AlertDC may require additional socialization to District residents for buy-in and comprehension of the system. There may be costs associated with public messaging that would be considered during the second year (2024) of plan implementation.