

Pinellas County Emergency Management to test emergency alert system on May 6

The test alert will be sent through the Alert Pinellas community notification system.

- Pinellas County uses Alert Pinellas to let users know about urgent community news.
- A test will be held on Monday, May 6, to test the system.
- Citizens are asked to listen to the entire message.

Pinellas County Emergency Management and Pinellas County Marketing & Communications will conduct a test of the Alert Pinellas emergency notification system on Monday, May 6, from noon to 6 p.m.

During the test, those who signed up for Alert Pinellas, the free countywide emergency notification system, will receive the test message according to the options they chose when they registered. Users have the option to receive alerts through a phone call, text or email.

Alert Pinellas does have provider based public phone numbers within the system, and phones not registered with Alert Pinellas may receive the test alert.

Those who receive the test message are urged to listen to the whole brief message so the system will accurately reflect the call results. Any real-event messages always include key information and instructions, so it is important to listen to listen to the entire message.

All citizens are encouraged to sign up for Alert Pinellas at www.pinellascounty.org/AlertPinellas to ensure that they receive timely warning and notifications and take full advantage of the automated national weather service severe weather alerts that are provided free of charge. Also, some municipalities provide community information notifications.

When signing up for Alert Pinellas, citizens and employees can enter up to five locations to receive geo- targeted notifications, add multiple phone numbers, text message numbers, and email addresses – as well as customize what weather advisories and notifications they want to receive.

This test is part of Pinellas County's dedication to provide planning, coordination, prevention, and protective services to ensure a safe and secure community.

To learn more about Alert Pinellas, or to sign up for free additional locations, contact methods, and weather warnings, please visit www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas

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Emergency and Community Notification
Service for Pinellas County, Local
Municipalities and the Sheriff's office

Frequently Asked Questions about Alert Pinellas Emergency Notification System

What is Alert Pinellas and why is it important to me?

Alert Pinellas is an emergency notification service by which public safety managers can notify residents and businesses in a variety of ways including: cellular phone, home and work phones, text messaging or email about emergency situations. The system is capable of sending messages only to specific neighborhoods or the entire community.

Am I already included in the Alert Pinellas database?

Only published, listed telephone numbers will be automatically uploaded into the Alert Pinellas database.

Do I need to create my own account?

Citizens should create their own account to take advantage of the options that are available to users of the service. You can enter up to four different phone numbers to be called, two numbers for text notifications, plus two email addresses. You can also enter up to five different locations to make sure you know about urgent news in the areas of the county that you care most about, such as home, school, work, etc.

Can I change my options?

By creating your own account you can change your options at any time.

How do the notifications work?

When an emergency situation warrants notification to a neighborhood or the entire county, authorized system administrators log in to the Alert Pinellas notification system and send notifications using the methods you have chosen.

What agencies will send notifications?

The Alert Pinellas system is used by partner agencies throughout the county. You may receive a notice from Pinellas County Government, local municipalities or the Sheriff's Office.

When will Alert Pinellas be used?

Alert Pinellas will be used when emergency situations arise that you should know about. Severe weather situations, missing persons, evacuation notices, fires or floods, major roadway issues, boil water notices, an active shooter situation are a few example of the types of situations that will necessitate an Alert Pinellas notice.

Why do I need Alert Pinellas when I have TV to keep me informed?

Alert Pinellas provides an additional level of safety. If power goes out, you may not be able to depend upon TV. However, because telephone lines are self-powered and most people now have cell phones, we can continue to keep you informed through messages delivered by Alert Pinellas. You should always have at least two ways of staying connected to urgent news.

What if my phone number or email address changes?

If your contact information changes, simply visit your profile and update your information.

Will my information be shared with others?

No. The information that you provide is protected and will be used for notification purposes only. We will not give or sell your contact or location information to any vendor or other organization.

How will I recognize an Alert Pinellas message?

Alert Pinellas messages will come from the phone number **(727) 464-4222**. We suggest you program this number in your cell phone as a “new contact” and use “Alert Pinellas” as the contact name.

What should I do if I receive an Alert Pinellas message?

Listen carefully to the entire message. It will be brief and will not be repeated. Follow the instructions given. You may be directed to a website or a telephone number for further information. Do not hang up until you have heard the entire message or you might miss vital information. Do **not** call 9-1-1 for further information.

I have a cordless phone, and it does not work when the power goes out. How am I going to get the Alert Pinellas message?

There are two ways you can continue to receive telephone messages from the county through Alert Pinellas:

1. Make sure you have at least one working corded telephone – and be sure to turn the ringer on.
2. Use the Alert Pinellas online registration form to enter a Primary Phone number and an alternative phone number. You can fill in the Alternative Phone number with another contact numbers such as your cell phone number or work number. Entering in an alternative phone number will cause BOTH your primary and alternative phone numbers to be called.

Will Alert Pinellas leave a message on a machine?

Yes, Alert Pinellas will leave a message on a machine or on voice mail. Part of the Alert Pinellas solution is the ability to recognize answering devices and leave the message completely in one pass.

What happens if the line is busy?

If the line is busy, Alert Pinellas will try again.

What circumstances might prohibit Alert Pinellas from delivering a message to me?

1. If you have only cordless phones in your residence, the power is out and you have not registered an alternate phone number, Alert Pinellas will not be able to contact you.
2. If your line is busy for an extended period and your calls do not forward to voice mail or an answering machine in a busy condition, Alert Pinellas will stop calling your number. It's best to have an alternate phone number in the calling database for these situations.
3. If you have a privacy manager on your main phone service, Alert Pinellas will not be able to contact you unless you have registered an alternate number that will accept the call.

If a notification is sent out is it guaranteed I will receive it if I register?

When the emergency notification is activated, the system will make several attempts to reach the registered numbers. Due to the emergency, phone systems, both landline and cell may be inundated with calls and your provider may not be able to deliver the message. We do not assume legal responsibility for technical difficulties that may result in notification failures.

Will this cost me anything?

Pinellas County offers this service for free. If you choose to receive a notice by text message, your service provider's normal text messaging fees will apply.

Do I need to install software on my phone?

No. The system uses industry standard SMS text messaging protocol to send messages to your phone. Your mobile phone plan will need to accept text messages to work properly.

If I registered with Alert Pinellas or a previous Emergency Notification System do I need to do it again?

Yes. Please register again even if you registered for Alert Pinellas or other Emergency Notification System in the past. This is an improved notification system that is used by the county, Sheriff's Office and municipalities. By creating a new account you can benefit from the many options that are offered by Alert Pinellas.