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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Please Note: The following release from the State of Maryland Emergency Management Administration is an update and reminder of the Nationwide EAS Test scheduled for next Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. Please read and take note that the test period has been reduced from 2.5 minutes to 30 seconds on that date.

**MARYLAND RESIDENTS ARE URGED TO BE AWARE
OF FIRST NATIONWIDE TEST OF EMERGENCY ALERT
SYSTEM**

Test to Take Place November 9 at 2 p.m. Eastern Standard Time

REISTERSTOWN, MD (Nov. 1, 2011) -- The federal government will conduct the first nationwide test of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) on Wednesday, November 9, at 2 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, and the Maryland Emergency Management Agency wants all residents to understand this event will be just a test, and not a real emergency alert.

The test is expected to last approximately 30 seconds. During this period, regularly scheduled television, radio, cable, and satellite shows will be interrupted as the system is being tested.

“It is important to make sure the system works at the national level,” said Richard Muth, Executive Director of the Maryland Emergency Management Agency. “The system is regularly used for local and regional notifications, but this will be the first national test. But I want all Maryland residents to understand that this will only be a TEST.”

The test is being conducted by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), as part of an ongoing effort to keep the nation safe during emergencies and strengthen our resilience against all hazards. The EAS is an alert and warning system that can be activated by the president to provide information to the public during emergencies.

NOAA's National Weather Service, governors, and state and local emergency authorities also use parts of the system to issue more localized emergency alerts. The test is an important exercise to ensure communication of critical information in a national emergency. Similar to EAS tests already conducted frequently on the local level, the nationwide test will involve television and radio stations across the United States and its territories.

Under the FCC's rules, radio and television broadcasters, cable operators, satellite digital audio radio service providers, direct broadcast satellite service providers and wireline video service providers must receive and transmit presidential EAS messages to the public. A national test will help federal partners and EAS participants determine the reliability of the system, as well as its effectiveness notifying the public of emergencies and potential dangers nationally and regionally. The test will also provide the FCC and FEMA a chance to identify improvements needed to build a modern and fully accessible system.

The public should use this event as a reminder that everyone should establish an [emergency preparedness kit](#) and [emergency plan](#) for themselves, their families, communities, and businesses. Visit www.Ready.gov for more information readiness. For information about the EAS test, visit <http://www.fcc.gov/encyclopedia/emergency-alert-system-nationwide-test>.

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NOTE TO MEDIA: MEMA staff is available for interviews about the EAS test. Call Ed McDonough at 410-517-3632 (o) or 410-446-3333 (c) or Eddie Hopkins at 410-517-3615 (o).