	COMMUNICATION POLICY:
City of Seattle	Use of Community Notification System

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor
Bill Schrier, Chief Technology Officer

Purpose:
The City of Seattle has potential terrorism and emergency management response reasons for communicating directly with its residents and employees. There are also ancillary needs the City has for such communications ranging from public safety emergencies to enhanced customer services. The City is installing a Community Notification System to serve these purposes. The opportunity to establish this system was provided by the federal Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI) grant program. The City's CNS system can rapidly make thousands of outbound calls per hour using databases that are integrated with the City's geographic information system to improve and augment communication with residents and businesses. City departments need policies to guide use of this notification system, and the public needs to understand how it will be used.

This policy provides definitions of authorized and appropriate uses, prioritizes the calls, defines the approval process, and guides implementation.

Affected Departments and Outside Agencies
This Policy applies to all City departments, legislative branch, judicial branch, and public library and other entities that the City authorizes, listed below:

Public entities inside Seattle City Light service area.

Public entities outside Seattle City Light service area, allowed only in an emergency as defined in the Vendor's license agreement.

Policy
The Community Notification System will be authorized only for uses that do not violate the City's Ethic and Election Rules and Policies, and that further City of Seattle business, assist mutual aid or regional cooperation.

Calls from the Community Notification System must meet one of five criteria, in order of priority level:

1. First priority level calls are necessary to protect public safety or alert the public to an imminent or occurring emergency or disaster, in accordance with the National Incident Management System. This could include acts of terrorism, or other natural or human caused disasters such as a dirty

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> bomb explosion, dam failure, or other situations that would create a danger to life and safety.
> 2. Second priority level calls notify the public to situations that involve emergent public safety issues but are less urgent or threatening than first priority calls. Examples include an Amber alert, sewer break, emergency school evacuation, or emergency utility outage.
> 3. Third priority level calls notify individuals of emergency problems with facilities in their neighborhood, e.g. a water main break.
> 4. Fourth priority level call are made to small groups of citizens or customers as an enhancement to services that they receive from city government, e.g. senior watch, a drilling reminder, excavation notification, DPD permits status, library books ready/overdue, etc. This category of calls requires advance planning.
> 5. Fifth priority calls are general interest calls to large groups of citizens/businesses which are not of an urgent nature, e.g. fire station relocation, proposed neighborhood projects, smoke detector battery change public service announcement. These calls should be vetted thoroughly to determine the efficacy of placing these calls via the Community Notification System. This category of calls requires advance planning with approval of the department director, and notification of the Mayor's Office in advance.

Calls to City employees may be made under any of the above priorities for Reasons and purposes determined by the department director.

An approval process will be followed to originate calls from the Community Notification System to the public.

> 1. First and Second priority level calls must be approved by the Incident Commander or by the City's Director of Emergency Management.
> 2. Third priority level calls must be approved by either the City's Director of Emergency Management or the Director of the impacted department.
> 3. Fourth and fifth level priority calls must be approved by the Director of the requesting department

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Unlisted Telephone Numbers

Unlisted numbers will be called only under two circumstances:

Public emergencies that affect health and safety of the household

The owner of the unlisted number has specifically given the City permission to call

Listed Telephone Numbers

Listed numbers should be called only under the following circumstances:

Public emergencies that affect health and safety of the household and neighborhood

The owner of the listed number has generally given the City permission to call

Definition of Permission to call: Citizen/Business permission to call can take the form of:

Existing departmental call lists (City would have call anyway using a live person)

Signed up in meetings for follow up calls

Signed utilities customer service contract permitting Utilities to call

Hours of call

Other than the First, second and third priority calls, all other calls should only be place between 9am to 8pm.

Implementation
This policy will be in effect upon authorization by the Chief Technology Officer.

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Exceptions

Requests for exceptions to this policy should be made in writing to the City's Chief Technology Officer.

Document Control

- This document is owned and maintained by the Chief Technology Officer.
- This Policy shall be reviewed yearly and updated as required.
- Recommended by the Steering Committee of CNS.

Request Date	Requested By	Changed By	Content Change Description	Approved By
9/25/2006	CNS Steering Committee	Luckj	Remove reference to HLS alerts (outdated). Modified footer date. Removed reference to 'pre-recorded' messages. Adjusted approval process to match remainder of document and current understanding. Removed reference to the City's Web site for registration (does not exist).	Steering in General Barb Graff in detail

Authorized this 2nd day of October, 2006 by:

_____

Bill Schrier
Chief Technology Officer
City of Seattle

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IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

Citywide Implementation

A committee made up of a public information officer from SPD, SFD, SPU, SCL, DoIT, and the Mayor's Office will review all pre-recorded messages that will reach large groups of residents/businesses. This committee will be a resource for the deployment strategy.

The following deployment strategy will increase the effectiveness of the Community Notification System.

1. Educate the public about the Community Notification System so that they will be receptive to both the medium and the message.
2. Use discretion when determining whether the Community Notification System is the best tool to reach the desired audience so that overuse will not lessen its effectiveness.
3. Create a branding so that the resident/business will recognize a call from the City of Seattle:
   a. Same Caller ID
   b. Same introduction

Departmental Implementation

Each department that might have use for the Community Notification System will develop a process to follow. Elements of that process may include the following actions:

1. Create a list of the types of calls that are suitable for the Community Notification System.
2. Designate person(s) responsible for vetting and approving message.
3. Designate person(s) who can authorize calls. If this is other than the department director, this designated person(s) must also notify department director prior to authorizing calls.
4. Designate staff(s) authorized to launch the calls. They must be trained technically as well as administratively.

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5. Prepare scripts in advance and prerecord message if possible, in multiple language if appropriate.
6. Make sure message is clear, brief, and easily understood.

7. For external calls, department Public Information Officer must review and approve message in advance.
8. Identify on the message if the call is for emergency.
9. Give the called party a way to call back, via bulletin board or live person if possible.
10. Create and update, via departmental system administrator, custom call lists data using called parties input and check against the central "do not call matrix."
11. Check to see if there is potential of a similar message to same called parties being sent from another department. The Public Information Officer group is a good resource of multiple department coordination.
12. Contribute to the central "do not call matrix."
13. Consider the language preference of the called party.

The Community Notification System is capable of providing the following call information:

1. The call log includes call originator, authorizer, number of calls made, time of calls, call event durations, number of successful connections, hang ups, machines, number of feedback from called parties.
2. Call list data bases (only accessible to authorized personnel).

The Citizens Service Bureau should also be notified and provided with a script of call. This is particularly important when a large number of calls are to be made.