ONSOLVE®

10 Wildfire Emergency Alerting Best Practices to Minimize Business Disruptions

Wildfires break out with little warning. When they strike a business, they can have widespread, long term impact.

Planning for wildfires and other disasters helps ensure your business continuity during an event and resiliency during recovery. And being prepared eases the effects on your employees and their families, suppliers, customers and the local economy.

A key part of your disaster planning is a reliable automated alert system to inform and protect your business stakeholders.

When wildfires threaten, follow these 10 tips to get the most out of the OnSolve® Platform for Critical Event Management.

ONE

Encourage system-adoption with your employees

A critical first step is engaging with your employees, so they use the system. Put together employee awareness campaigns promoting your emergency notification system (ENS) and share the benefits of using it. Alternatively, make new-hire enrollment automatic unless they specifically opt-out. Then to routinely maintain data, send yearly reminders to your workforce to keep their contact information updated.

Maintaining accurate contact information for your staff is a continuous process. Build plans around this part of your communications, ensuring you reach employees with critical alerts regardless of circumstances.

TWO

Provide recipients with information specific to them

OnSolve enables you to segment alerts with information specific to each audience group you need to reach. Alert vendors to delay or reroute shipments until further notice. Alert employees to stay home or avoid certain routes. Targeted alerting allows you to get the right message to the right people at the right time — and avoid giving people information irrelevant to them.

THREE

Target people based on where they are

Because the threat of wildfires is often based on geographic location, one of the most effective ways to reach those impacted is to set up an area of interest. If your business has multiple sites, use the geo-location feature to target alerts specific to areas — and to prevent employees, based on their addresses, from entering unsafe areas.

Create pre-written alerts

You can save valuable time and messaging accuracy by building pre-written alerts within your system. Creating scenarios for evacuations or office closures allows you to initiate an alert within seconds, notifying employees, customers and other stakeholders when a wildfire threatens your business and people.

Define emergency procedures and messaging responsibilities

Document every step of your emergency procedures. Decide who is responsible for creating, approving and sending emergency alerts. Determine messaging responsibility based on the audience, for example: internal, external, customer-facing positions, suppliers, the press, etc. Create a messaging matrix covering these situations.

Train and educate your employees

Train your personnel on how to use the alerting system. Organizations that take time to educate their employees see significantly higher adoption and response rates. OnSolve offers free weekly training webinars to refresh skills with a walk-through of the system to keep your team up to speed.

Establish a post-event follow-up plan

Wildfires continue to take a toll even after the smoke has cleared. Recovery challenges can include utility outages, road closures, building damage and supplier constraints. Plan how you will use your alerting system to keep stakeholders informed as you recover and return to normal operations.

Test your plan and alert system

Many businesses test as often as twice a month to make sure staff are familiar with their alert system. This helps to engage and familiarize your staff in advance, so they are confident they can trust the system in a time of crisis.

Furthermore, testing can help you identify out-of-date contact information and take steps to improve your database.

Review, evaluate, and improve

Once the fire is over and business operations have resumed, take time to review with your team what went right and what didn't. Conduct meetings and surveys to identify gaps where improvements can be made. Use these lessons and take-aways to improve your emergency alerting. A review often helps businesses return to normal quickly after a disaster — not only for wildfires, but other situations your business may face.

Take advantage of the many OnSolve options

OnSolve allows you to use almost every possible communication channel for sending alerts — phone, fax, text, email, RSS, voice, mobile app and more. Collect multiple points of contact for the people you need to reach to make sure you can deliver them urgent information, even when some communication infrastructure may be compromised.

The OnSolve Platform for Critical Event Management comes with powerful capabilities that enable you to analyze, in real time, the effectiveness of your event management — so you can improve your efficiency in delivering time sensitive information to your target audiences.

Wildfires happen with no warning. Be prepared with an emergency mass notification system (EMNS) — and keep the lines of communication open throughout a wildfire to save lives and property and minimize business disruption. And keep the information flowing to aid in your business's and community's resiliency and recovery.

Let us show you how the OnSolve suite of products can support emergency alerting in your organization.

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About OnSolve

OnSolve is a leading SaaS provider of critical event management technology that helps enterprises, SMBs and government entities better manage risk and strengthen organizational resilience. Using the most trusted and reliable AI-powered risk intelligence, critical communications and incident management technology combined with deep expertise, the OnSolve Platform for Critical Event Management helps organizations detect, respond to and mitigate risks that disrupt operations and threaten their people, places and property. With billions of alerts sent annually and proven support to both the public and private sectors, OnSolve delivers critical event management capabilities which keep our customers safe, informed, assured and productive when it matters most.

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