



# County of Monterey

Board of Supervisors  
Chambers  
168 W. Alisal St., 1st Floor  
Salinas, CA 93901

## Board Report

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**File #:** 12-1138, **Version:** 1

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Approve and authorize the Contracts / Purchasing Officer to sign the Agreement for the Sharing of Costs for a Telephone Emergency Notification System (TENS) between the County and cities in Monterey County that are participating in the system.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that the Board of Supervisors:

Approve and authorize the Contracts / Purchasing Officer to sign the Agreement for the Sharing of Costs for a Telephone Emergency Notification System (TENS) between the County and cities in Monterey County that are participating in the system.

SUMMARY/DISCUSSION:

In 2008, during the Basin Complex Fire State of Emergency, the Board of Supervisors authorized the purchase of a Telephone Emergency Notification System (TENS) used to deliver public health and safety information via telephone and personal communications devices. A significant portion of that purchase was paid for by a grant from the California Office of Homeland Security. Since that time, the system has been used to provide a number of notifications to Monterey County Residents including: residents affected by wildfires including the Basin Complex Fire and the Gloria Fire; flash flood warnings from the National Weather Service to residents in the burn area; information regarding the Dayton Hazmat event after an explosion at a paint factory; missing person alerts including at risk elderly and juveniles; alerting neighbors of SWAT type actions, and messages to residents surrounding areas where a homicide or shooting occurred seeking information from witnesses.

During the first two years, use of the TENS system was restricted by terms of the grant to emergency notifications only. Now that the grant period has expired, all participating agencies can use the system for non-emergency notifications such as community meetings, special events, road closures or traffic problems due to events or road work, and safety messages to the public. Operation of the system will continue to be governed by the Emergency Communications Users Advisory Council (ECUAC). The ECUAC provides oversight and policy direction for the consolidated dispatch center. The ECUAC will review and oversee usage and make necessary policies, procedures and guidelines for use by all participating agencies. Policies will continue to prohibit system use for political or commercial messages.

During the last year, vendor enhancements to the system, described in Attachment 1, were added to improve the user interface and public sign-up page, making it easier for County and city staff to quickly get messages out to their residents via email and text as well as telephone calls. The real benefit of the system, however, continues to be its potential to quickly provide urgent emergency alerts to large numbers of people. The system proved its value during wildfires - and subsequent flash flood warnings in the burn area. The potential for earthquake, tsunami, major winter storms, flooding, or an event such as the gas line explosion in San Bruno, are the type of events the system was designed to handle. Greater use of the system for local non-emergency and small emergency or urgent events will insure that when a major event occurs, the Agencies and the public will be well prepared to send and receive the necessary emergency action alerts.

Emergency Communications has led a coordinated public information campaign including a public outreach event in conjunction with the Winter Storm Briefing to encourage Monterey County residents to register their cell phone numbers and e-mail addresses via a link on the County and each city's websites. As a part of this project, a website was developed and donations were obtained to cover costs of the outreach effort. The department anticipates initiating an additional phase of the outreach later this fiscal year and has applied for a community foundation grant to support this effort. The next phase of this effort will be a coordinated campaign with the cities to further publicize the need to sign up to receive alerts.

OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT:

The agreement has been approved by County Counsel as to form and by Risk Management as to liability provisions. Due to delays by some agencies in approving this agreement, Emergency Communications is submitting after the first two years of the intended term and the agreement includes an evergreen clause with the ability to terminate each year. Each year, all cities have paid their assigned cost share based on an initial interim agreement / letter of intent. At this time, nearly all cities have had this agreement approved by their governing bodies. It is anticipated that all cities in the County will participate in the system and ECUAC will establish policies and standard operating procedures for system use and Emergency Communications will serve as the lead agency administering the system. All participating agencies are paying for a share of system costs based on their city's population. The County's share of cost is based on population in unincorporated areas. Note that the system provides for unlimited use, by any and all User Agencies. Therefore the contract price covers all collective use regardless of number of times used, number of calls made or completed, etc. The Office of Emergency Services and Emergency Communications Department work cooperatively to administer this system.

FINANCING:

At the time the system was implemented, the cities agreed to share in the costs of the system via a letter of intent. Due to the Basin Complex Fires and the need to begin using the system immediately, the project was advanced prior to the execution of formal agreement with the stakeholders. The agreement before the Board for approval formalizes the cost sharing agreement. This Agreement caps the costs at \$300,000 per year based on approval of the Emergency Communications Users Advisory Council (ECUAC). This was based on the annual cost of the system in 2009 / 2010 of \$244,728 plus \$10,000 for public outreach. For the last two years, the Department successfully negotiated a vendor cost for the system of \$188,156, a reduction of nearly 23%.

The costs of this system were budgeted in the Fiscal Year 2012 / 2013 budget for the Emergency Communications Department. Approval of this action will formalize and confirm the participation of outside agencies.

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Approved by: Lynn Diebold                      Director  
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Attachments:

- 1) Vendor Enhancements and Usage Statistics
- 2) Agreement for Sharing Costs for Telephone Emergency Notification System
- 3) 21<sup>st</sup> Century Communications Agreement with Amendments