

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF STANISLAUS  
ACTION AGENDA SUMMARY

DEPT: CEO-Office of Emergency Services

BOARD AGENDA # B-9

Urgent

Routine

*D.S.*

AGENDA DATE December 15, 2015

CEO Concur with Recommendation YES  NO

4/5 Vote Required YES  NO

(Information Attached)

SUBJECT:

Approval to Enter Into an Agreement with Everbridge, Inc. to Provide a Mass Notification System in Stanislaus County

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Authorize the General Services Agency to enter into a one-year agreement with Everbridge, Inc, with four one-year renewal options, first year cost not to exceed \$98,150.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The recommended agreement with Everbridge, Inc. is \$98,150 for the first year. The cost includes \$67,900 for the mass notification system, \$22,950 for the Application Program Interface (API) and \$8,000 for implementation and training services. The Sheriff's Department and the Chief Executive Office-Office of Emergency Services/Fire Warden will be sharing the one-time and recurring costs of the Everbridge system and are funded from existing appropriations.

(Continued on Page 2)

BOARD ACTION AS FOLLOWS:

No. 2015-642

On motion of Supervisor O'Brien, Seconded by Supervisor Chiesa  
and approved by the following vote,

Ayes: Supervisors: O'Brien, Chiesa, Monteith, DeMartini, and Chairman Withrow

Noes: Supervisors: None

Excused or Absent: Supervisors: None

Abstaining: Supervisor: None

1)      Approved as recommended

2)      Denied

3) X Approved as amended

4)      Other:

MOTION:

Approved the Staff Recommendation and **amended** the item to direct staff to make the mass notification system and training available to the cities within Stanislaus County.

ATTEST:

  
CHRISTINE FERRARO TALLMAN, Clerk

File No.

**FISCAL IMPACT (Continued):**

The Everbridge Mass Notification system is hosted at Everbridge, Incorporated's U.S. data centers and is provided as a turnkey solution supporting unlimited domestic emergency alerts and domestic non-emergency messages. Included in the Everbridge proposal is an Application Program Interface (API) that allows the Everbridge system to interface with external systems such as the Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system in use at Stanislaus Regional 9-1-1. The proposal also includes implementation and training costs.

Should the County choose to exercise the subsequent year options, the cost per year would be \$90,150.

**DISCUSSION:**

Mass notification systems are used by emergency management services to alert citizens in the event of emergencies, natural disasters and other threats. Alerts delivered through mass notification systems can take the form of phone calls with pre-recorded messages, emails, text messages to cellular phones, and can even be integrated with electronic message boards and sirens. Making use of the Federal government's Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) and the Wireless Emergency Alerting (WEA) system, mass notification systems can also deliver messages via television and radio, as well as additional mobile device communication protocols.

The Office of Emergency Services/Fire Warden implemented an Emergency Notification System ("ENS") in 2006. That ENS has been in production since that time, and has been used to send approximately 80,000 messages a year to citizens of Stanislaus County and to first responders and some County staff. There have been a number of issues identified with the current implementation of the existing ENS product, in particular in its ability to reliably deliver messages to AT&T subscribers in the County, and also the product's mobile device application intended to receive and initiate notifications has at times been buggy and frustrating to users. Additionally, the existing ENS product is not configured to be redundant, and would likely require an additional circuit at a remote site and a new remote server to offer any significant fail-over capability.

The ongoing issues associated with the ENS product as well as the recent acquisition of the social networking platform "Nixle" by Everbridge, Inc., led to an investigation of Everbridge's mass notification system as a possible replacement for the ENS. Nixle is used by the Sheriff's Department and other law enforcement and fire agencies in Stanislaus County for communicating with the public. During this investigation, it was determined that Everbridge's mass notification system would be a more robust, and ultimately less expensive alternative to resolving the existing deficiencies in the ENS product.

The County of Alameda issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) in December, 2014 for a Unified Countywide Mass Notification System. Alameda County requested that bidders

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employ a "Software-as-a-Service" model, whereby the vendor was required to provide and maintain all infrastructure aspects of the system, including any messaging delivery capabilities. Alameda County's RFP included specific language allowing other tax-supported agencies within the State of California to participate in their negotiated contract. Everbridge, Inc. was the highest-evaluated vendor through Alameda County's RFP process and was awarded the contract.

The Everbridge mass notification system is designed to be fully redundant, and is housed primarily at two geographically separated data centers for additional reliability (one in California, one in Colorado). The Everbridge system makes use of a message delivery protocol for ensuring delivery of text messages that is less dependent on each carrier or telecommunication service provider and thus is less prone to the types of message delivery issues the County has seen using the existing ENS product.

Additionally, the Everbridge solution has increased capabilities for community engagement. Other communities using Everbridge have taken advantage of the features of the product, and the unlimited messaging provided, to deliver non-emergency messages to citizens who opt-in to receive such messages. City Managers, Boards of Supervisors, Public Works and Public Health departments in other counties are using the Everbridge system to share newsletters, information about road closures and health and illness information for citizens who enroll to receive them. This functionality comes at no additional cost, should the County of Stanislaus choose to take advantage of it.

The agreement negotiated by Alameda County, under which it is proposed Stanislaus County enroll, would allow any of the 9 cities in Stanislaus County to use the system for emergency notification purposes. The proposal includes unlimited administrators, allowing different departments or cities to manage their own groups and templates in the system. The proposal also includes a separate instance of the Everbridge system to be used for communication with County employees. This capability could allow targeted notifications to County employees in the event of an emergency such as one threatening the continuity of government. Everbridge is routinely used by other counties for messaging, for example, by law enforcement and fire agencies to their staff for call-back and to address coverage needs.

The Everbridge system has been adopted by a number of California counties, including the valley counties of Merced, Madera, Sacramento, Tulare and Kern. Other California counties making use of the Everbridge system include Tehama, Mendocino, Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo, Yolo, Placer, Monterey, Kings, Santa Barbara, and Ventura. The Everbridge system is in use by the California Department of Public Health and by numerous Federal agencies and large corporations throughout the U.S. and the world.

The proposed agreement with Everbridge is a one-year agreement, with an option for subsequent one-year renewal terms at a guaranteed fixed rate. There is no obligation to commit beyond one year. The product, being provided as a Software-as-a-Service means that no additional hardware or licensing is required to use the system.

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**POLICY ISSUES:**

Approval of an agreement with Everbridge, Inc. for implementation and provision of a mass notification system supports the Board priority of A Safe Community by enhancing communications to the public related to emergencies.

**STAFFING IMPACT:**

Existing staff from the Chief Executive Office – Office of Emergency Services, and the Sheriff's Department will manage the use of this system.

**CONTACT PERSON:**

Dale Skiles, Fire Warden, Assistant Director of Emergency Services. 552-3600  
Adam Christianson, Sheriff. 567-4468

ATTACHMENTS AVAILABLE  
FROM CLERK

Stanislaus County  
Board of Supervisors  
Public meeting  
12/15/2015



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# A Mass Notification System



A Mass Notification system supports communication to large numbers of citizens via telephone, email, text or other electronic methods in an emergency, to inform, warn and coordinate a response.



# Boston Marathon Bombings, 2013



# Lessons Learned

Adopt a mass notification system. “It would have diminished the rumors and increased the clarity of what was really happening in a much faster way. We were sending out mass E-mails to everyone, but not everyone was reading their E-mails. People would have understood what was closed, what was locked, where people should park, where people should come in, why SWAT was outside.” *Bonnie Michelman, Massachusetts General Hospital's director of police, security and outside services*





# Everbridge Mass Notification System

- Everbridge, Inc's system is in use by many California counties, including Merced, Alameda, San Francisco, San Mateo, Sacramento, Kern, Santa Barbara, and Ventura
- The Everbridge system provides unlimited messages within the jurisdiction
- The Everbridge system would be integrated with the Federal Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) and Wireless Emergency Alerting (WEA) systems to reach all citizens in an emergency

# Everbridge System

- GIS-based message targeting;
- Customization with caller ID, message, and voice;
- Ability to create user groups, units, and distribution lists for non-emergency notifications;
- Automatic publishing to social media accounts;
- Provides redundancy and continuity of government operations if physical infrastructure is damaged or destroyed;

# Everbridge System

- Flat-rate use system-unlimited messaging;
- Web-based, no software required
- Targets the individual, not the device;
- Allows for two-way dialogue between the sender and receiver;
- Offers text-to-speech conversion including language conversion;

# *Everbridge Agreement*

- In 2014 Alameda County, working with neighboring counties, released a Request for Proposal for a mass notification system, making use of a “Software-as-a-Service” model
- Alameda County selected Everbridge, Inc.’s product
- Alameda’s RFP and contract specified that other “tax-supported entities” could make use of their negotiated agreement
- The agreement is for one year, with 4 price-guaranteed one-year renewal options



# More than Mass Notifications

- The Everbridge product is licensed to a jurisdiction (Stanislaus County), and can be used by other jurisdictions (cities, law enforcement, fire) within that area
- A separate “instance” of the system would be specifically used for communications with employees (e.g. for continuity of operations purposes)
- Product includes an “opt-in” portal for citizens to determine what level of communication, and on what devices, they desire (e.g. newsletters, road closure information, emergency-only, etc.)





# Staff Recommendations

- Authorize the General Services Agency to enter into a one-year agreement with Everbridge, Inc, with four one-year renewal options, first year cost not to exceed \$98,150 to be funded jointly by the Sheriff's Department and the Office of Emergency Services/Fire Warden