



BREVARD County
Emergency Management

Public Information Release

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Brevard County Launches New Communication Tool for Hurricane Season

MELBOURNE, Fla. - For Brevard County residents, the second half of hurricane season historically marks the beginning of the action. Despite the best efforts of service providers, hurricanes can knock out power, phone and internet to thousands of residents. This year the Brevard County Office of Emergency Management has partnered with Melbourne-based viaRadio to maintain communication with residents before, during and after a storm. viaRadio developed a local alert system combines radio-style receivers, known as HEARO, with software technology to send immediate text messages to residents from Brevard County Emergency Management.

During this hurricane season, Brevard County officials will use the HEARO Local Alert Receiver as a standard part of their comprehensive emergency messaging protocol. Officials will employ the technology to communicate with county staff, emergency management team members and in some cases, residents of Brevard County on subjects ranging from urgent safety concerns to road and school closures.

Residents are encouraged to purchase HEARO receivers to gain access to a wide variety of official emergency communications, from evacuation and boil water alerts to locations for food and other emergency supplies following a disaster. Residents may purchase receivers directly from viaRadio's headquarters in Melbourne, or online.

The HEARO receiver displays informational text messages in English or Spanish. It will notify thousands of local residents in a matter of seconds. HEARO carries selected NOAA weather warnings and other public safety text alerts. Unlike standard NOAA weather radios, HEARO radios have technology to limit weather alerts to the immediate area of the radio. Using FM radio infrastructure, the viaRadio emergency warning system works even when power, phone and Internet are out. The radios have a 60-hour battery life in case of power outages.

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Page 2 – Brevard Launches Communication Tool

Beginning last year, city officials in Indialantic and Palm Bay have been using the ENVOY Emergency Solutions platform to notify residents who own HEARO receivers. Indialantic Fire Chief John MacDonald says, “As a community which counts on a bridge for evacuation, we need a reliable way to communicate emergency information to our citizens even when the power and phone lines have gone down.”

Indialantic relies on a volunteer firefighter force to respond to fire and medical emergencies. The city has experience significant benefits from the expanded communication with residents. During emergency situations a single operator can send life-safety text messages to residents with receivers, regardless of weather conditions.

ENVOY is an RDS-based (Radio Data System) emergency warning system. A critical and necessary aspect of the program is the use of an FM broadcast signal. In Florida, viaRadio formed a group of reliable broadcasters committed to public service known as the HEARO Network. The network consists of FM radio stations donating the use of their FM signal. In Brevard County those stations are WEJF 90.3 and WCIF 106.3 in Palm Bay, WNUE 98.1 in Titusville, and WSBH 98.5 in Satellite Beach.

About viaRadio

[viaRadio](#) Corporation provides warning systems to governments, school/university systems, emergency managers, hospitality organizations and other large organizations in the U.S and Caribbean. The systems include user-friendly software systems designed to trigger instantaneous text alert messages to [HEARO](#) receivers. Systems in operation provide warning and post-event information for natural weather phenomena including tornado, hurricane, fire and volcanic activity. Founded in 2005, viaRadio Corporation along with its parent Germany-based 2wcom are worldwide leaders in RDS/RBDS equipment and data systems. For more information about viaRadio or the HEARO, visit www.viaradio.com.

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