Media Advisory

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CAPCOG Hopes for Surge in Registrations to
WarnCentralTexas.org during National Preparedness Month

Austin, Tex. – More than a dozen regional public safety and emergency management officials gathered today to launch the first ever Central Texas regional community preparedness initiative to increase public awareness about, WarnCentralTexas.org. The effort, spearheaded by the Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG), aims to add 120,000 new sign-ups in the 10-county area during September, coinciding with National Preparedness Month.

WarnCentealTexas.org is a free public service serving Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Fayette, Hays, Lee, Llano, Travis, and Williamson Counties. Using this system, emergency responders can send hyper-local messages to people in specific neighborhoods or streets. Local governments communicate primarily in English, and make every effort where possible to also send critical alerts in Spanish. Sign-up information will strictly be used by local government to send warning notifications. Local governments do not sell, trade, lease or loan any data, or citizen-supplied data to third parties.

"Rarely will you find a topic where 10 counties can epitomize the concept of regionalism by supporting this program in unanimous fashion," CAPCOG Executive Committee member and Burnet County Commission Joe Don Dockery said. "National Preparedness Month in September is an opportune time to solicit our citizens to voluntarily engage in public awareness by signing up for this program."

It is important to note that newer model cell phones all receive notification from the federal government, such as Amber Alerts. WarnCentralTexas.org is a separate system, and critical tool for local first responders to reach the affected public during an emergency. Area residents can register multiple times to stay informed about emergencies wherever they live, work, and visit.

"I want to ask building and business owners or managers to please encourage tenants and employees to sign-up to receive emergency alerts," Building Owners and Managers Association (BOMA Austin) President Sammie Baker said.

All jurisdictions in the 10-county region can use the system to share critical emergency information events, such as:
• Evacuations from floods, wildfires or public health threats,
• Shelter-in-place information during law enforcement or public health incidents,
• Boil water notices or prolonged power outages, and
• Options to receive general, non-emergency community messages.

"We are asking everyone in our region to sign up today at WarnCentralTexas.org. Please share the information with your loved ones in this region," CAPCOG Executive Committee member and Bastrop County Judge Paul Pape said. "Signing up takes just a few minutes, but those few minutes can be the difference in saving cherished property or a life."

"After you sign up, take action to prepare for emergencies by developing a family emergency plan and basic emergency supply kit," City of Austin Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Director Juan Ortiz said.

About the Capital Area Council of Governments:

The Capital Area Council of Governments, governed by elected officials from the 10-county region it serves, has worked for more than 46 years as an advocate, planner and coordinator on important regional issues. Programs and services related to public safety and emergency response, environmental planning, economic and community development and the elderly are delivered at a regional level to leverage funding, maximize cooperation and eliminate duplication. CAPCOG serves Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Fayette, Hays, Lee, Llano, Travis and Williamson counties.

About the regional notification system:

The Capital Area Council of Governments uses a regional notification system (RNS), WarnCentralTexas.org, as a crucial public-safety tool. The Web-based tool is used by Central Texas emergency response government organizations to alert the public to emergency and optional non-emergency situations. It's an effective tool for notifying a relatively large number of people in a short period of time.

Signing up at with WarnCentralTexas.org allows emergency personnel in your local community to directly contact you by phone, text or email during a disaster or public safety event. Using WarnCentralTexas.org, emergency response teams can warn residents about dangerous conditions and situations as events unfold. They can quickly give specific directions that affect your neighborhood such as evacuation orders and directions to shelters.

CAPCOG's current vendor for operating this emergency warning tool is [CodeRED](). CAPCOG and CodeRED will not distribute any information provide by signing up. Thousands of public safety organizations across the United States and Canada use the CodeRED community notification system to initiate emergency notifications. Volunteered information will solely be used by local government to send warning notifications. Residents must register cellphone numbers and email addresses to get alerts sent to their mobile devices, but CAPCOG has already registered phone landlines.

Messages may include content such as incident-specific information, recommended protective actions or response directives. They can be delivered to various devices that accept voice, email or SMS text content and to alpha or numeric pagers. The message sender identifies recipients, develops the message and determines which types of devices receive the message. Regional partners that use the system can send voice messages to phone landlines using CAPCOG's 9-1-1 database. However, residents and visitors to the CAPCOG region must voluntarily register their cellphone numbers and email addresses to receive notifications on mobile devices or computers.

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