

FEMA and WBZ NewsRadio Boston to Unveil New Emergency Broadcast Studio

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BOSTON — The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), in partnership with iHeartMedia Boston, today announced it has completed an important emergency radio broadcast facility modernization project at iHeartMedia's WBZ NewsRadio 1030 in Boston to improve critical alert and warning capabilities when disasters threaten public safety.

The WBZ facility serves as a Primary Entry Point (PEP) station for FEMA's National Public Warning System (NPWS), maintained under FEMA's Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS), and provides critical information to the public before, during and after incidents and disasters.

Under the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System Modernization Act enacted in 2015, Congress required FEMA to upgrade PEP stations across the country to ensure continuity of terrestrial broadcast services under all hazards. PEP stations are specially designated NPWS broadcast stations that serve as the primary intake source of initial broadcasts for a national alert. FEMA equips these stations, which are operated by local station personnel, with backup communications equipment and power generators that enable them to continue broadcasting information to the public during and after an emergency, including conveying official alerts to communities regionally and nationwide. These free-standing emergency studios, located at the radio transmitter sites, are specially designed and hardened to withstand various natural disasters and acts of terrorism. This helps ensure that the President can alert and warn the public under all conditions. Currently, there are 77 PEP stations that ensure capable of reaching 90 percent of the U.S. population.

WBZ is the 13th PEP station to complete the all-hazards upgrade. The modernization to the emergency studio includes increased sheltering capabilities, expanded broadcast capacity, and sustainable power generation for all types of hazardous events, increasing WBZ's resiliency to continue broadcasting during emergencies.



WBZ is celebrating its 100th year of broadcasting, providing a trusted voice for local, regional and national news and information in Boston and throughout New England. To mark the anniversary, the station received [a congratulatory letter from President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.](#)

“In coordination with our partners at iHeartMedia, we’ve increased WBZ’s ability to continue operating under all conditions, be they natural disasters, acts of terrorism or other man-made events,” said Antwane Johnson, FEMA’s IPAWS Director. “Broadcast radio communicates critical safety information to the public during an emergency and serves an extremely vital role in our nation’s public safety and national security communications infrastructure.”

Said Alan Chartrand, Boston Market President for iHeartMedia: “September marked 100 years that WBZ has been on-air serving communities in and around Boston and hundreds of miles beyond. Radio is a lifeline for these communities, and there continues to be a significant investment made to ensure WBZ’s resiliency during times of crisis when communication is of vital importance. iHeart is proud to partner with FEMA on the nation’s emergency and alert system, and salutes and shares the agency’s commitment to protecting the public.”

FEMA and WBZ will hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Friday, October 15, 2021, (11 a.m. to 1 p.m. ET) to unveil the upgraded WBZ transmitter and PEP Site (45 Newport Road, Hull, MA 02045.) The news conference will include FEMA, federal, state and local elected officials, and a live demonstration from WBZ NewsRadio 1030 on-air hosts.

Speakers include:

- Antwane Johnson, Director, Integrated Public Alert and Warning System, FEMA
- James (Nick) Russo, Federal Coordinating Officer, FEMA
- Manny Centeno, IPAWS Program Manager, FEMA
- U.S. Senator Edward Markey
- State Senator Patrick O’Connor
- State Representative Joan Meschino
- Hull Board of Selectmen Chairwoman, Jennifer Constable
- Alan Chartrand, Boston Market President, iHeartMedia
- Jeff Littlejohn, Executive VP Engineering & Systems Integration, iHeartMedia
- Dan Rea, On-air host, WBZ NewsRadio 1030



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For more information about IPAWS or the PEP modernization effort, go to FEMA's website at <https://www.fema.gov/emergency-managers/practitioners/integrated-public-alert-warning-system/broadcasters-wireless>. To learn more about iHeartMedia and WBZ NewsRadio 1030 Boston, visit www.wbznewsradio.iheart.com.

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For more information on attending the news conference, please **RSVP** and direct any questions to Dennis Pinkham at (617) 956-7547 or dennis.pinkham@fema.dhs.gov, or Jennifer Savage at (419) 351-5145 or jennifersavage@iHeartMedia.com.

About FEMA:

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About iHeartMedia Boston:

iHeartMedia Boston owns and operates WBZ-AM, WXKS, WJMN, WZLX, WBWL, WRKO, WZRM, and WXKS-AM, and is part of iHeartMedia. iHeartMedia, Inc. [Nasdaq: IHRT] is the leading audio media company in America, reaching over 250 million people each month. It is number one in both broadcast and digital streaming radio as well as podcasting and audio ad tech and includes three business segments: The iHeartMedia Multiplatform Group; the iHeartMedia Digital Audio Group; and the Audio and Media Services Group. Visit iHeartMedia.com for more company information.

