



Mass Notification System Policy

1.0 Purpose

To establish a standard practice for the use of the Town of Mahone Bay Mass Notification System (MNS). The Town of Mahone Bay Mass Notification System will be utilized by the Town to provide emergency and non-emergency communications to residents, businesses, and community partners.

2.0 Scope

The policy applies to all web-based mass notifications, including those related to public safety information, emergency announcements, service interruptions and non-emergency informational announcements.

3.0 Objectives

The objectives of the Mass Notification Policy will be to:

- i. Provide clear guidelines for the manner in which the mass notification system will be used
- ii. Provide clear guidelines for when the mass notification system will be used to communicate with the public
- iii. Provide clear guidelines for who will be authorized to issue announcements via the mass notification system

4.0 Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 System Administrator - The Administrator of the Mass Notification System shall be designated by the CAO. The System Administrator has overall responsibility for the system, its policies, user procedures, system access and credentialing for authorized users. They will be the main point of contact with the software support network. All system issues are to be reported to the System Administrator.

4.2 Dispatch Team – A staff Dispatch Team will be designated by the CAO as those authorized to launch messages on the MNS. The Dispatch Team will be comprised of representation from the Town departments authorized to launch notifications using the Mass Notification System.

The Dispatch Team will assist with development of the system and will meet periodically to review system usage, discuss best practices, and develop plans for optimal use of the MNS software.

4.3 Policy Development – The System Administrator will be responsible for developing the MNS Policy and Procedure document. The Dispatch Team will assist with the development and implementation of MNS Policy and Procedure.

5.0 Messages on the MNS System

5.1 Normal Operations – The Dispatch Team are the designated single point of contact authorized to launch MNS mass notifications for non-emergency notifications.

5.2 Emergency Notifications – Emergency notifications are those that pertain to threat to life and/or property and unplanned service interruptions which may require the public to take immediate action. Emergency notifications will be sent to all those potentially affected by the situation, as well as the Dispatch Team, Town Management Team and Elected Officials. Anyone other than an authorized system user, Emergency Messages requiring immediate release should be sent directly to the System Administrator.

5.3 Examples of EMERGENCY MESSAGES:

Boil water	Unplanned Electrical Outage
Evacuation Orders	Water Main Breaks
Shelter-in-Place Orders	Emergency Shelter Opening
Law Enforcement Emergency	Hazardous Materials Spills
Fire threatening life and/or property in Mahone Bay	

5.4 Non-Emergency Messages – Non-emergency notifications will only be deployed using the general notification database; they will only be sent via text, email, and phone. All non-emergency notifications must be pre-approved by the most senior management available from the following list:

- Chief Administrative Officer
- System Administrator

5.5 Community Notification Messages – The System Administrator and the Dispatch Team shall make recommendation to Council regarding the use of non-emergency categories of messages to be shared via the MNS Only those who have subscribed to the community notification message categories will receive messages other than emergency messages.

5.6 Do Not Call List – Those residents and businesses in the Town of Mahone Bay who do not wish to be contacted by the MNS have the option to be added to the Do Not Call List, either through the online registration system or by contacting Town staff.

6.0 External Agencies

Agencies external to the Town may request mass notifications from the Town of Mahone Bay System Administrator in the event of threat to life and property. The System Administrator is the designated **SINGLE POINT OF CONTACT** authorized to launch mass notifications for non-access agencies. The requesting agency must provide authorizing

signature from the agency executive officer. The Town of Mahone Bay reserves the right to deny any request to share information from a non-access agency. The System Administrator may confer with the CAO or delegate to reach a decision to approve or deny a request prior to launching a mass notification. Only third-party information that is relevant and local will be considered for sharing through the Town's mass notification system.

7.0 Approval Goal

The goal of the Message Approval Process is to prevent unauthorized or duplicate messages from being sent to the public. Once authorized approval has been given to send a Mass Notification message, the sender is required to notify all others who have the authority to approve messages that an approved message was sent (including the message content).

8.0 Confirmation Procedure

After launching a message, the sender shall view the Mass Notification Session Statistics to ensure that the message was properly delivered. Notify the System Administrator the MNS software support if there are any concerns with deliverability.

9.0 Creating Contact Groups

The System Administrator is responsible for establishing and maintaining internal contact groups within the MNS Dispatchers can request any collection of users for a Group they choose to designate.

11.0 Training and Exercise

The System Administrator is responsible for ensuring that the Dispatch Team is fully trained to use the MNS at all times. Webinar-based training and refresher training can be taken at any time online. Each system user should, at a minimum, conduct a test call monthly consisting of a text message or a recorded phone call to their own phone and that of the System Administrator to exercise their skill and validate familiarity.

12. Repeal

On the effective date of this policy, the Town of Mahone Bay Mass Notification Policy, dated September 2019 is hereby repealed.

Clerk's Annotation for Official Policy Book

Date of Notice to Council Members of Intent

to Consider {7 days minimum notice}: N/A

Date of Passage of Policy: May 28, 2026

I certify that this Policy was adopted by Council as indicated above.

Clerk

Date