



Weathering the storm: Mastering emergency communication during high-impact weather events

A practical guide for security and
organizational leaders



Table of contents

Introduction: The new imperative for weather resilience	3
Why severe weather demands a modern communication strategy	3
What you will learn	3
Chapter 1: The modern security leader’s mandate in crisis management	4
The data-driven shift: Security’s ownership of emergency notifications.....	4
Beyond sending an alert: The lifecycle of a critical event	5
Chapter 2: From reactive to proactive: Harnessing real-time intelligence	6
The limits of traditional weather monitoring	6
Strategy 1: Triggering notifications with precision.....	7
Practical steps for implementation.....	7
Chapter 3: Simplicity in action: Streamlining your response efforts	8
Why complexity is the enemy of speed	8
Strategy 2: Unifying and simplifying your toolkit	8
Practical steps for implementation.....	9
Chapter 4: Maintaining control: Ensuring operational clarity before, during, and after the storm	10
The danger of a communication vacuum.....	10
Strategy 3: Creating a closed-loop communication system	10
Practical steps for implementation.....	11
Conclusion: Building a culture of resilience	12
Key takeaways	12
Your first steps towards a better plan.....	12

Introduction

The new imperative for weather resilience

Severe weather doesn't operate on a predictable schedule. A distant storm can become a local emergency in minutes, exposing critical gaps in an organization's ability to communicate, coordinate, and protect its people. When a high-impact event strikes, the difference between a controlled response and a chaotic failure often hinges on the strength and clarity of your emergency communication plan.

For too long, many organizations have relied on outdated phone trees, manual alert processes, and fragmented information sources. This approach is no longer sufficient. Today's dynamic threat landscape requires a proactive, intelligent, and simplified strategy for keeping your teams safe and your operations intact.

This guide is designed for security professionals and organizational leaders who are responsible for the safety and resilience of their people. We will move beyond theory to provide actionable strategies for modernizing your approach to emergency communication during severe weather.

For more insight on how to protect your people and maintain operations during severe weather events go to: everbridge.com/use-cases/inclement-weather-solutions/

What you will learn

Drawing on best practices in crisis management, this resource will equip you with the knowledge to:

- **Understand** the expanded role of security teams in owning emergency communications.
- **Implement** strategies to use real-time intelligence for faster, more accurate notifications.
- **Streamline** your communication tools and processes to reduce complexity and improve speed.
- **Maintain** operational clarity and build trust with your employees before, during, and after a disruption.

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Ready to transform how you manage critical weather events and strengthen your organization's resilience? Request your personalized demo to see Everbridge in action today.

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Chapter 1

The modern security leader's mandate in crisis management

The climate landscape has changed. In the past year alone, 69% of incidents tracked by the Everbridge Risk Intelligence Monitoring Center were climate-related - including wildfires, extreme heat, earthquakes, floods, tornadoes, and hurricanes. Real-world examples, such as the \$131 billion in estimated losses from a single Los Angeles wildfire and the record-setting wildfire seasons across the EU, further demonstrate how climate-driven disasters are increasing in magnitude and frequency.

The responsibility for guiding an organization through a crisis has shifted. Where emergency notifications might once have been a distributed or ambiguous task, the mandate is now clear: security leaders are at the helm.

The data-driven shift: Security's ownership of emergency notifications

The role of security in managing critical communications has become a core function. This means that in nearly every organization, when a crisis hits, all eyes turn to the security team. This is not just a procedural shift; it is a fundamental change in expectation. Leaders are expected to provide clear, timely, and authoritative information to protect employees, secure assets, and ensure business continuity.

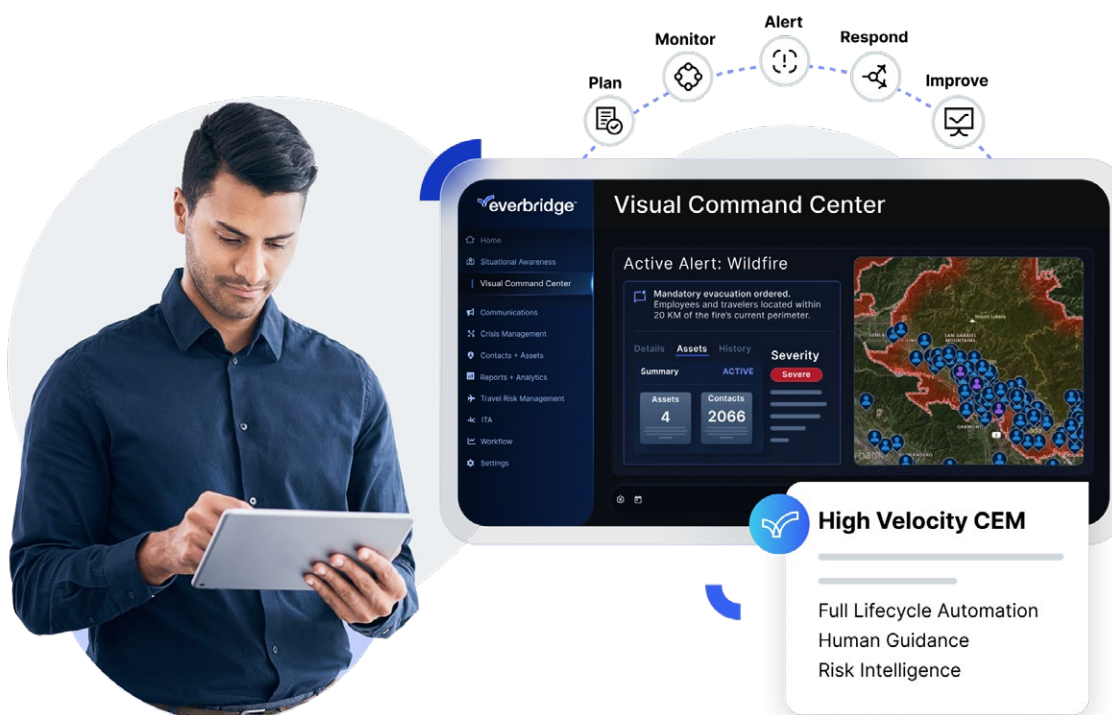


Beyond sending an alert: The lifecycle of a critical event

Owning emergency notifications involves more than just pushing a button to send a message. It means managing the entire lifecycle of an event, which includes:

- **Plan:** Establishing clear strategies, roles, and processes to prepare for potential threats and ensure readiness across the organization.
- **Monitor:** Proactively identifying potential risks and emerging threats before they impact your operations.
- **Alert:** Delivering clear, targeted information to the right people, at the right time, for better decisions.
- **Respond:** Coordinating timely actions and safety measures to protect people and operations.
- **Improve:** Confirming the safety and status of all affected individuals, communicating the “all clear,” and applying lessons learned to strengthen future preparedness and resilience.

Failing at any stage of this lifecycle can undermine the entire response effort.



Discover the power of Everbridge 360 and understand how to streamline emergency response, minimize delays, and maximize efficiency, all in one intuitive solution, by taking a personalized demo: everbridge.com/everbridge-360-pro-personalized-demo-lp/

Chapter 2

From reactive to proactive: Harnessing real-time intelligence

Relying on public weather forecasts or generic news alerts is a reactive posture that leaves your organization vulnerable. Proactive leadership requires integrating real-time, location-specific intelligence directly into your emergency response protocols.

“

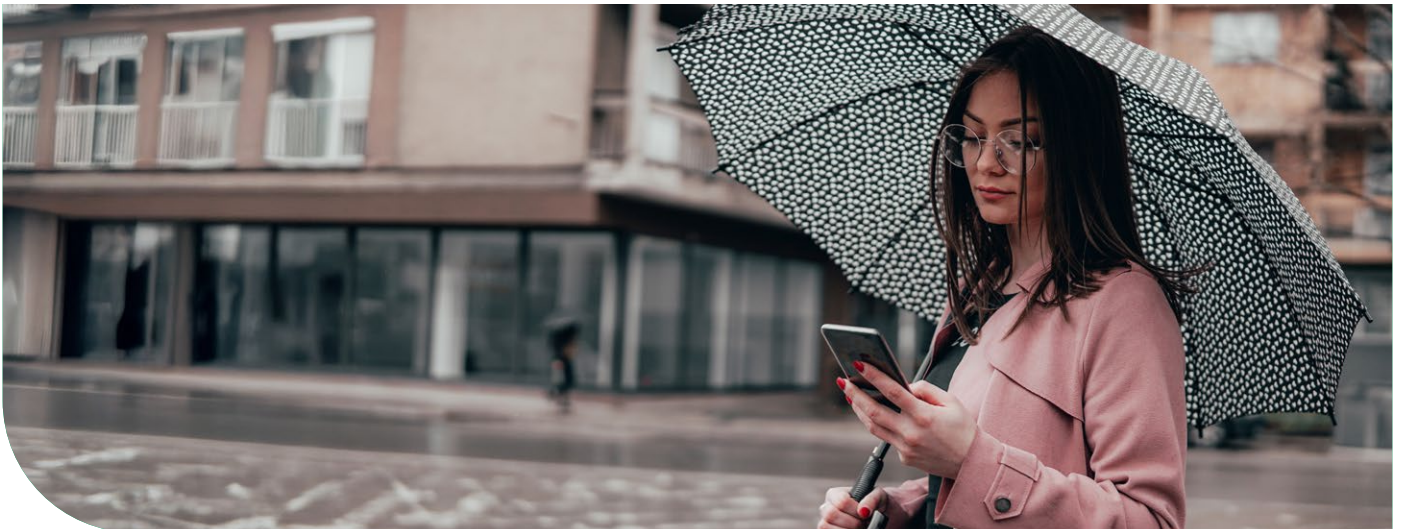
Climate change is no longer a distant threat - it's here, reshaping risk for every organization. We are honored to work with the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction at such a pivotal moment of ongoing climate challenges. Helping to build resilient communities and organizations is core to our mission.”

Dave Wagner, President & CEO, Everbridge

The limits of traditional weather monitoring

A weather report covering an entire country is not specific enough to protect a single facility. This broad approach leads to two significant problems:

- 01 Delayed response:** Waiting for a public announcement to confirm a threat means you have already lost valuable time.
- 02 Alert fatigue:** Sending mass alerts to unaffected people for every potential storm causes them to tune out. When a truly critical message arrives, they may ignore it.



Strategy 1: Triggering notifications with precision

To maintain operational clarity and speed, your communication triggers must be tied to verified, automated data.

- **Define geofences:** Instead of monitoring a zip code, draw a precise digital perimeter around your facilities, campuses, and even major travel routes for executives.
- **Establish automated thresholds:** Work with your team to define exactly what conditions trigger an alert. This removes human hesitation from the initial warning process. For example, an alert could be automatically triggered if lightning is detected within 5 miles of your facility or if a tornado warning polygon intersects with your geofence.
- **Target your audience:** Real-time intelligence allows for surgical precision. If a flood warning is issued for a specific part of the city, you can alert only those who live or work there. This ensures every alert is relevant, increasing trust and attentiveness.

Practical steps for implementation

- 01 **Assess your intelligence source:** Evaluate your current weather intelligence provider. Does it offer real-time, location-specific alerts for threats like lightning, hail, and tornados?
- 02 **Map your assets:** Geofence all critical locations, including offices, data centers, and supply chain routes.
- 03 **Define your alerting tiers:** Create a simple framework. For example:
 - **Advisory (low risk):** A storm is forecast for the region in 24 hours. (Email to facilities team).
 - **Watch (medium risk):** Severe weather is expected. (Email and SMS to all local personnel).
 - **Warning (high/imminent risk):** A tornado is detected moving toward your facility. (Automated, multi-channel alert to all personnel with “Shelter in place” instructions).

Discover how extreme weather is reshaping risk roles and accelerating adoption of high-velocity resilience solutions in this article:

everbridge.com/resource/climate-risk-drives-demand-for-smarter-resilience-tech/

Chapter 3

Simplicity in action: Streamlining your response efforts

During a crisis, cognitive load is high and fine motor skills can be impaired. If your emergency plan requires a security operator to consult a three-ring binder, log into multiple systems, and manually type a message, it is destined to fail.

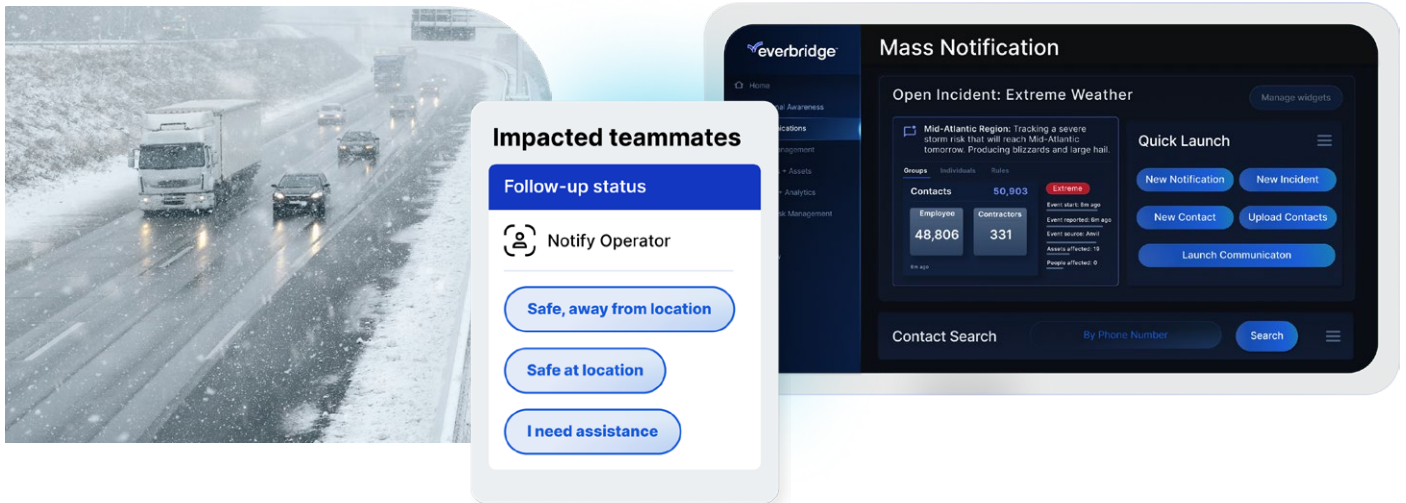
Why complexity is the enemy of speed

Every extra step, every separate login, and every moment spent searching for the right words adds seconds, or even minutes, to your response time. In a severe weather event, those moments can be the difference between safety and injury. The primary goal for any leader is to reduce the “time-to-notify” to its absolute minimum.

Strategy 2: Unifying and simplifying your toolkit

Leaders must aggressively seek to remove friction from the communication process.

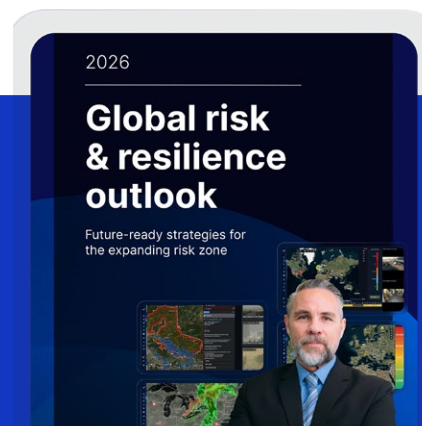
- **Integrate your platforms:** Your mass notification system should be the central hub, not another silo. It must integrate directly with your threat intelligence feeds, for example as part as a critical event management platform. An alert from your weather provider should be able to automatically trigger a pre-staged notification without human intervention.
- **Develop pre-scripted templates:** The middle of a crisis is not the time to workshop a message. Work with your communications and HR teams to develop clear, concise, and pre-approved templates for every likely scenario. This includes facility closures, evacuation orders, shelter-in-place instructions, and “all clear” messages. Templates should be fill-in-the-blank, requiring only critical details like time and location.
- **Embrace multi-modal delivery:** Never rely on a single communication channel. Severe weather can easily disrupt power or cellular service. A robust plan uses a multi-modal approach, sending alerts simultaneously via SMS, email, voice calls, desktop pop-ups, and building PA systems. This ensures your message has the highest possible chance of being received.



Practical steps for implementation

- 01 Audit your current process:** Map out every step it currently takes to send an emergency alert, from detection to delivery. Identify every manual action and point of potential delay.
- 02 Build your template library:** Draft and get approval for at least five core weather-related templates. Load them into your notification system.
- 03 Conduct a multi-modal test:** Run a planned drill using all of your communication channels. Confirm that messages are delivered successfully across all platforms and identify any technical or procedural gaps.

Explore future-ready strategies in our
2026 Global risk & resilience outlook report:
everbridge.com/2026-outlook/



Chapter 4

Maintaining control: Ensuring operational clarity before, during, and after the storm

Sending an alert is just the beginning. True crisis management involves maintaining clear, two-way communication throughout the event and into the recovery phase. Silence breeds fear and misinformation, which can be as damaging as the storm itself.

The danger of a communication vacuum

If your personnel don't hear from you, they will fill the void with speculation and rumors from social media. This undermines your credibility and can lead to dangerous actions, such as people attempting to travel to a closed facility. Operational clarity means everyone knows their status, the company's status, and what is expected of them at all times.

Strategy 3: Creating a closed-loop communication system

Communication must be a two-way street. Knowing who has received your message and, more importantly, who is safe, is critical for an effective response.

- **Require confirmation:** Use two-way communication features as part of your critical event management platform. A simple message like, "A tornado warning is in effect. Shelter immediately. Press 1 if you are safe, Press 2 if you need assistance," provides immediate, actionable intelligence. This allows security teams to focus resources on those who have indicated they need help.
- **Establish a cadence for updates:** During a prolonged event like a hurricane or blizzard, commit to a regular update schedule (e.g., a new message every 60 minutes). Even if there is no new information, a message that says, "We are continuing to monitor the situation and will provide another update at 3:00 PM," provides reassurance and prevents panic.
- **Communicate the "all clear" decisively:** Just as important as the initial warning is the final "all clear." Never leave your people guessing when it is safe to return to work or resume normal activities. This message should be just as clear and authoritative as the initial alert.



Practical steps for implementation

- 01 Integrate polling into your templates:** Add a simple polling question to your primary warning templates (e.g., “Reply YES if you are safe”).
- 02 Define your update schedule:** In your emergency plan, specify the communication frequency for different types of events.
- 03 Create an “all clear” protocol:** Define who has the authority to issue the “all clear” and create a specific template for it.

Talk to an expert on how to improve your organizational resilience:
everbridge.com/demo/

Conclusion

Building a culture of resilience

With a majority of SOC's already monitoring weather impacts, the foundation for a modern response strategy is in place. The crucial next step is to refine how that intelligence is converted into swift, simple, and life-saving action.

Key takeaways

- **Own your mandate:** Security's role is no longer just supportive; it is leadership.
- **Leverage intelligence:** Shift from passive monitoring to proactive, automated alerting based on real-time data.
- **Simplify everything:** Reduce complexity in your tools and processes to maximize speed and effectiveness.
- **Close the loop:** Use two-way communication to confirm safety and maintain operational clarity.

By implementing these strategies, you can transform your severe weather response from a reactive scramble into a well-orchestrated, resilient operation. You build trust with your employees, protect your assets, and solidify your role as a vital leader in your organization.

Your first steps towards a better plan

Do not wait for the next storm. This week, review your current emergency communication plan. Ask these three critical questions:

- 01 Is our alerting process dependent on manual monitoring and decisions?
- 02 Do we have pre-approved message templates for severe weather events?
- 03 Can we confirm who is safe during an emergency?

If the answer to any of these is "no," it is time to build a better plan.

Stay ahead of severe weather events with Everbridge 360™

Everbridge 360 unifies risk intelligence, critical communications, and incident management in a single, purpose-built Critical Event Management (CEM) platform, so you can manage severe weather and other threats with confidence.

Powered by Purpose-built AI, Everbridge 360 enables you to plan, monitor, alert, respond, and improve across the full lifecycle of a critical event. Gain earlier visibility into emerging weather risks, rapidly deliver targeted alerts, coordinate response actions in real time, and account for people and assets, all from one seamless platform.

With Everbridge 360, organizations reduce communication delays, improve response speed, and continuously strengthen operational resilience in the face of an expanding risk landscape.

Experience the power of Everbridge for yourself

Ready to transform how you manage critical events and strengthen your organization's resilience? Request your personalized demo to see Everbridge in action today. Call us at +1 (888) 366-4911 to speak with a resilience expert, or schedule a demo at everbridge.com/demo

Book a demo



Additional resources

High Velocity CEM webinar series

Gain expert guidance, practical insights, and real-world solutions to tackle both physical and digital threats. Our ongoing webinar series empowers your team to ensure business continuity and resilience in an ever-changing risk landscape.

[Register here →](#)

Rapid Resilience videos

Stay informed on critical global events with timely updates and expert analysis from Everbridge specialists. Our Rapid Resilience videos provide actionable strategies aligned with real-world developments, delivered as events unfold.

[Watch here →](#)

Thought leadership insights

Explore thought-provoking articles and videos from industry experts. Resilience isn't just about responding to crises - it's about anticipating challenges, adapting to change, and thriving in the face of disruption. Gain insights from leading voices shaping the future of resilient organizations.

[View here →](#)

Explore the Everbridge product suite

Discover Everbridge High Velocity CEM, the industry's most advanced critical event management platform. Combining automation, risk intelligence, and Purpose-built AI, it delivers resilience at scale. Explore our full product suite designed to support your organization in every step of its resilience journey.

[Learn more here →](#)

Take a virtual tour

See how Everbridge can transform your organization with a personalized demo tailored to your needs. Select your areas of interest, and we'll deliver a custom video showcasing the solutions that matter most to you.

[Visit here →](#)

Online resource hub

Access a wealth of knowledge, including whitepapers, analyst reports, online training, and in-person events. Our comprehensive resource hub equips you with the tools to navigate crisis management, ensure business continuity, and manage today's expanding risk environment effectively.

[Explore here →](#)

Next steps

Turn insight into action

The risks outlined in this report demand more than awareness, they require the ability to execute with speed and precision. Everbridge enables organizations to operationalize insights through High Velocity Critical Event Management, strengthening preparedness and ensuring confident, coordinated response as events unfold. Protect your people, assets, and operations by transforming regional risk insights into proactive, measurable actions, powered by Everbridge's CEM platform.

Speak with a CEM expert

Discuss your organization's critical event readiness with our specialists. Learn how Everbridge helps you coordinate communications, automate response workflows, and make informed decisions before incidents disrupt operations.

[Talk to an expert today →](#)

See High Velocity CEM in action

Experience how Everbridge High Velocity Critical Event Management unifies intelligence, automation, and response in a single platform. See how you can detect threats sooner, respond faster, and continuously improve resilience across your organization.

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Looking for more severe weather content?

Explore these resources:

[Webinar: Navigating uncertain climates →](#)

[Critical event kit: Hurricanes →](#)

[Blog: Winter safety tips for employees →](#)

[Flood preparation checklist →](#)

[Winter storm preparation checklist →](#)

[Hurricane preparation checklist →](#)

[Earthquake preparation checklist →](#)

[Wildfire preparation checklist →](#)





About Everbridge

Everbridge is the global leader in Critical Event Management (CEM), helping organizations achieve a true business resilience advantage. With Everbridge High Velocity CEM™, our customers accelerate response times, minimize disruption, and maintain operational control amid today's most complex threats. Using Purpose-built AI, decision-ready risk intelligence, and full lifecycle automation, Everbridge enables organizations to know earlier, respond faster, and improve continuously with confidence.

Everbridge... Keeping People Safe and Organizations Running™

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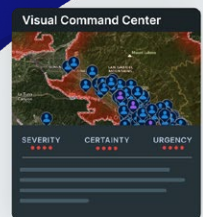
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High Velocity CEM

Full Lifecycle Automation
Human Guidance
Risk Intelligence



Impacted teammates

 ☐ Safe, away from location
☐ Safe at location
☐ I need assistance

Everbridge delivers a business resilience advantage with High Velocity CEM™, powered by Purpose-built AI and decision-ready intelligence to accelerate response, reduce downtime, and protect what matters most.

Request a demo at everbridge.com/demo or call +1 (888) 366-4911.

