

# Hall County, Georgia



“ The community engagement and emergency uses of Everbridge are endless. Just use your imagination. Our entire county, across the public and private sector, residents and visitors, is better connected because of our use of Everbridge and Nixle.”

David Kimbrell  
**Hall County, Georgia**

## OVERVIEW

Hall County covers 430 square miles across north central Georgia, with a population of 194,000 residents. The county features the Chattahoochee River, which creates Lake Lanier – the most visited Corp of Engineers lake in the U.S. – attracting over 10 million visitors a year. Hall County is also known as the “Poultry Capital of The World” and features the top rated cardiac hospital in the state of Georgia.

### PROBLEM

Hall County is susceptible to severe weather and sees more tornados, injuries and deaths than any other county in Georgia (tornado activity in Hall County is 109 percent higher than the average U.S. county). Hall County also faces winter weather and flash flooding, but prior to 2012, had no mass communication system, other than outdoor sirens, to deliver emergency notifications to residents, visitors and area businesses. Moreover, departments and agencies within the county lacked an automated communication system to help with the coordination of incident response and scheduling activities.

### SOLUTION

With Everbridge and the Nixle Community Engagement solution, Hall County now has a reliable notification system in place that enables the county to distribute communications and instructions to residents and visitors on their preferred contact paths and devices. From delivering tornado and flash flooding notifications, to sending keyword-based text messages regarding community events such as park closures and traffic near Lake Lanier, to daily staffing alerts for Fire and EMS, the county continues to find new uses for the Everbridge system.

## Q&A with David Kimbrell, Emergency Management Director, Hall County



### SEVERE WEATHER NOTIFICATIONS:

As a county susceptible to tornadoes, winter storms and all types of extreme weather, Hall County relies on Everbridge to deliver emergency notifications to residents and visitors. For example, during a road washout that trapped over 150 residents without ingress or egress, the county was able to distribute instructions via Everbridge to ensure people could safely avoid the situation, or exit when the incident was addressed.

### LAKE LANIER:

As the largest lake in Georgia, Lake Lanier attracts over 10 million visitors each year. During the summer months, Hall County leverages Everbridge's integration with the nation's Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) to send automated weather notices that keep area residents and lake visitors safe and informed, and help maintain a more coordinated environment around the lake and surrounding roads.

The county also leverages Nixle Community Engagement to offer the ability for visitors to opt-in for lake-specific safety, weather and traffic updates.

### DAILY DEPARTMENTAL USES:

In addition to resident notifications, Everbridge provides Hall County with a communications and incident management tool for specific agencies and departments. For example, County fire/EMS uses Everbridge to notify employees of daily staffing needs, while 911 dispatch uses Everbridge for incident notifications to team members during major events.

### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR GROUP-SPECIFIC MESSAGING:

As a supplement to Everbridge, Hall County added Nixle Community Engagement for non-emergency, event-related messaging. For example, leveraging Community Engagement's functionality, the county establishes keywords during its annual conference, enabling attendees to text a keyword to 888-777 and automatically opt-in for SMS updates on daily conference messages, agendas and reminders.

Similarly, the county offers this keyword messaging to other organizations, including the local courthouse, which uses the tool for juror notifications. Jurors simply sign in with a keyword by texting it to 888-777 and then receive notifications about daily court needs. This helps the county save \$40 per person, per day, by limiting the amount of visits that jurors need to make to the courthouse.

Additional departments and organizations that use the tool include the parks and leisure department, which sends notifications of cancelled ball games to parents and community members. In addition, local churches use the tool to notify members of severe weather cancellations and special events or prayer requests.

### About Everbridge

Everbridge is a leading unified critical communications platform trusted by corporations and communities of all sizes that need to reach the right people for immediate action, collaboration, and decision-making. Connecting millions of people and internet-connected devices, the company provides reassurance that secure, compliant messages are delivered, locally and globally, received and responded to, no matter the recipient's location. Everbridge is based in Boston, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Beijing and London.

For a full product description, along with best practices and product details please see the Everbridge User Guide and Everbridge University.

