



## **Media Advisory – November 1, 2011**

**Contact: Christopher Schwarzen**

Office: 425-388-3883

Email: Christopher.Schwarzen@snoco.org

### **National communication test not a 9-1-1 emergency**

Snohomish County residents should be aware that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the National Weather Service (NWS) will conduct the first-ever national-level test of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) on Wednesday, Nov. 9.

The test will take place at 11 a.m. and may last up to three and a half minutes.

While the test is similar to the way local emergency alert system tests are conducted, this will be the first nationwide test expected to be broadcast simultaneously over all communication service providers including television stations, cable television, broadcast radio stations, and satellite radio systems across the United States.

This national test may look like regular local EAS tests that most people are already familiar with, but there will be some differences in what the public will see and hear. The audio message will repeat “This is a test” but any accompanying video message scroll may not indicate “This is a test.”

Residents are reminded that this broadcast is only a test and that no emergency exists. At times, residents have mistaken EAS tests and called 9-1-1 concerned about their safety and well-being.

Calls to 9-1-1 to inquire about the test could overwhelm the telephone network at emergency call centers and delay the county’s 9-1-1 centers from receiving calls from citizens reporting real emergencies. Only call 911 if you have an actual emergency requiring a police, fire or medical response.

Calls to 9-1-1 to get information about this test should not be made. For more information about the national test, go to [http://www.fema.gov/emergency/ipaws/eas\\_info.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/emergency/ipaws/eas_info.shtm).

In Snohomish County, 9-1-1 service is provided by different agencies, including SNOCOM and SNOPAC, both emergency communication centers.

###