



# Survey Report

## Canada's Alert Ready Test

Conducted May 4, 2022

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## Executive Summary

On May 4, 2022, provincial and territorial emergency officials, with the exception of Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, Nunavut and Nova Scotia, conducted tests of Canada's National Public Alert System (NPAS) known as Alert Ready. These public test alerts were sent via radio, television, LTE compatible wireless devices, and other third-party emergency alert products such as Alertable.

This was the eighth time that Alert Ready public tests incorporated wireless devices, after two tests in 2018, two in 2019, one in 2020, and two in 2021. The majority of provinces and territories issued their alerts at 1:55 PM local time.

The one-way broadcast nature of most Alert Ready distribution channels such as radio, television, and LTE compatible wireless devices does not provide a direct way for the public to provide feedback on alerts received, including test alerts.

Therefore, we take the initiative to solicit feedback each time by way of a national survey and did so again for the May 4, 2022 test, with a specific interest in the effectiveness of the wireless alerting channel. The survey questions are provided in the appendix.

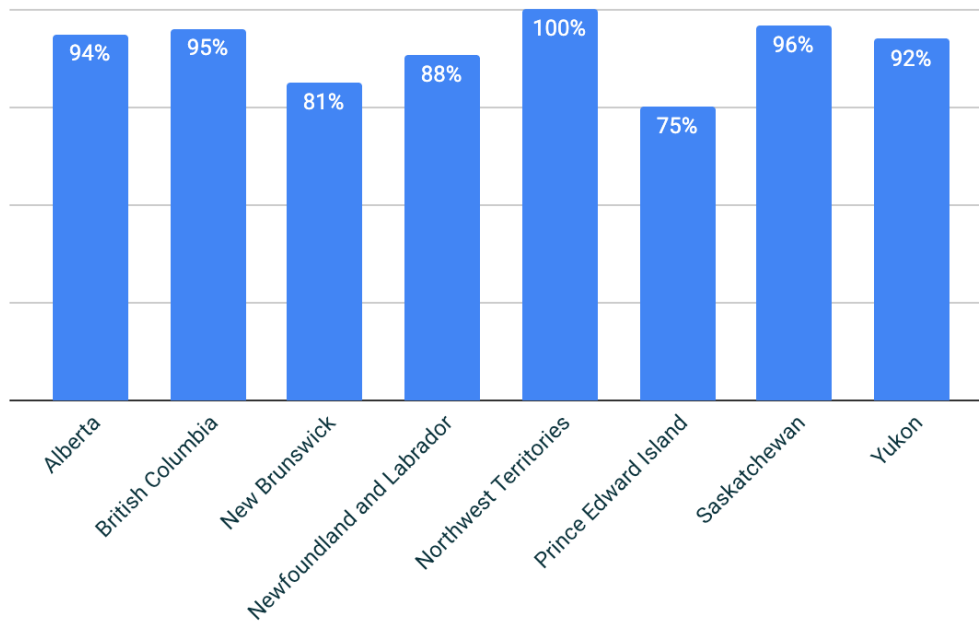
In summary, 7128 survey responses were received, which is an increase of 33.6% from the previous survey. However, 117 survey responses were received from individuals who did not indicate the province or territory that they were in when they received the alert or indicated a location outside of Canada and therefore could not be confirmed as having received the alert message through their wireless provider or local broadcaster.

More than 90% of these responses came from British Columbia, a province that did not participate in the last test. 94.7% of respondents said they received the alert, and the lowest provincial wireless success rate was 75% with most provinces showing results in the 90% and higher range. Third party mobile app was the most popular alternate way of receiving the alert. 320 respondents reported this being the first time they have received an alert and 95% thought the message was clear and easy to understand.

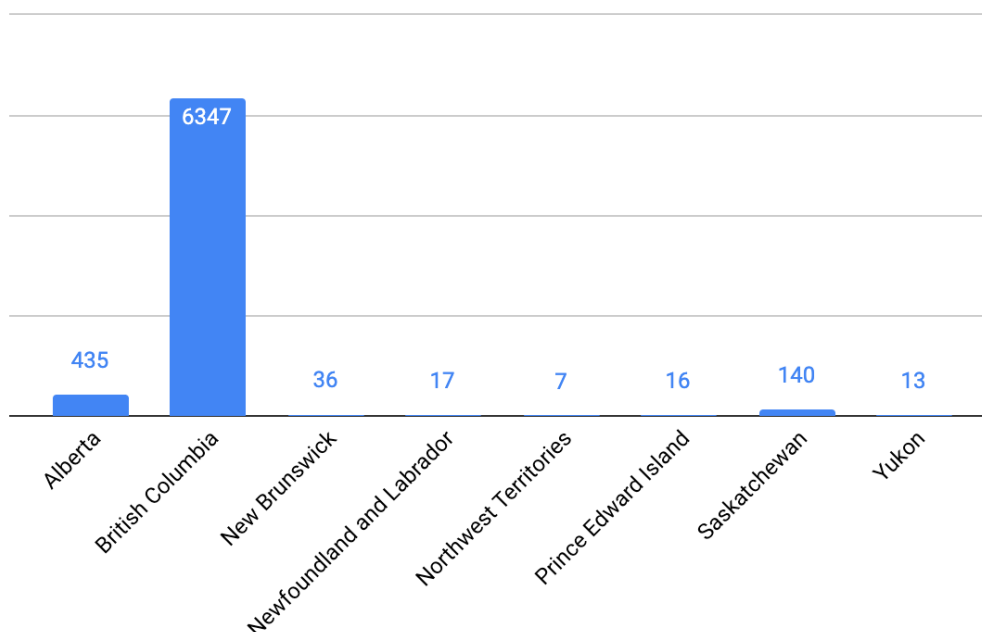
## Results

Please note that Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, Manitoba and Nunavut are not shown in the results as they did not send a test alert.

### Wireless Alert Success Rate



### Total Survey Responses



- A total of 7,128 survey responses were received, an increase of 33.6% from the last survey. Despite a number of provinces and territories not participating in the test this time, the number of responses was still high. This is largely because of increased participation from those in British Columbia, a province that did not participate in the last test.
- 117 survey responses received could not be accurately traced to a particular province or territory, either because the respondent didn't indicate the location or they indicated a location outside of Canada suggesting they received the alert some other way than wireless test message. These responses were removed from the total number of responses received in calculating some of the statistics presented in this report.
- Manitoba chose not to participate this year due to an active emergency. Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia also chose not to participate. Nunavut had planned to issue the test alert but was unable to participate the day of the test.
- 90.5% of the survey came from British Columbia, with 6.2% from Alberta, and the remainder from the other provinces and territories.
- 94.7% of respondents reported receiving the wireless test message (an increase of 2.4% from the last test), 5.3% reported they did not. This is an increasing trend as only 70% of respondents received the wireless test message when wireless alerting was first introduced in November 2018.
- Of the respondents who reported problems receiving the test, 67.8% reported that they had successfully received a previous test or a real alert for a past emergency, indicating that something prevented them from receiving the test this time.
- The Northwest Territories had the highest wireless success rate with 100%, followed by Saskatchewan with 96% and British Columbia with 95%. Of the provinces that sent a test alert, Prince Edward Island had the lowest wireless success rate reported with 75% received.
- 95.2% of respondents reported that the test message was clear and understandable, which is a 3.2% increase from the last test.
- Next to wireless, the most popular alert distribution channels were third-party mobile apps and television, in that order. 40.9% of respondents reported receiving the alert through mobile apps, television followed with 11.7%, radio with 4.7%, and social media at 3.7%.
- 53.3% of respondents reporting problems with receiving the wireless alert were reported from those using an Apple device and 45.1% were using an Android device.

- For devices that successfully received the wireless alert, 61.7% reported using an iPhone while 38.3% reported using an Android device.
- 47.3% of the respondents reported having received a real alert for a recent emergency in addition to receiving the most recent test alert, which is down 10% since the last test.
- The top 5 suggestions from respondents to the question “If you could improve one thing about emergency alerts, what would it be?” were:
  - Be able to override device settings, specifically volume, vibrate and silence/do not disturb modes.
  - Change the sound. Many thought it was either too loud or too soft, too long or too short. Several suggested a building up of the sound so that it doesn’t scare you but does still get your attention or having a warning with a softer tone issued a few minutes prior to the test alert.
  - Have the ability to opt out of some or all alerts. Some respondents suggested having tiers of alerts, with the ability to disable tests and less severe alerts.
  - Ensure more people receive them and that more advance warning is given out prior to the test alert. Email and landline databases were suggested as possible solutions as well as a downloadable app, air raid sirens, social media and receiving alerts while within apps like YouTube.
  - Make the alert easier to read and understand. The alert information should be more clear and better instructions given. Increased spacing between words, a different background color, brighter text and simpler language were all suggestions. A link should also be provided to ensure people know where to go to get more information, specifically on how to prepare for an actual emergency instead of just sending out a test.

## Other Observations

- Many suggested that the system could be tested monthly and that only a sample of the population be tested. Others requested that more types of alerts are issued, primarily for severe weather such as a heat dome.
- 53% of respondents who reported not receiving the test alert were using Telus as their service provider, 19.7% were using Rogers, and 14% were using Bell.
- Respondents reported they did not have enough time to read the WPA message before it disappeared and would like an SMS text instead that they could refer back to. Improved location targeting, the ability to filter what alerts they receive, the ability to opt out of test alerts and having the alert override incoming or on-going phone calls was also suggested.

- Respondents would like to have your phone recognize if you are driving and not send the test through to avoid potential accidents.
- A longer vibration, lights, text to voice for those who have accessibility challenges and to have alerts sent through multiple channels (e.g. tablet, app, phone call, or an email list) would help increase the reach of the notification. Including additional languages besides English and French is desired.
- Many respondents commented on the use of the Alert Ready system for Amber Alerts. While some commented they did not want to receive Amber alerts at all, or not at night, or that these alerts should be targeted to smaller regions, many others support the use of Alert Ready for Amber alerts.
- Better thought out timing for the tests was suggested. Some respondents mentioned PTSD from previous disasters and that the test alert was triggering as it was around the anniversary of the real event.
- The most common answers to the question “How and when do you think the Alert Ready system should be used?” was to continue using it the way it is currently being used or the system does not need improvements and is working well. Other answers varied from not at all, to including all severe weather, any threat to life or property and missing children/vulnerable persons.

## More Information

If you would like more information regarding the May 4, 2022 Alert Ready test, please submit your inquiry here: <https://www.alertready.ca/>.

If you would like more information on the community and workplace notification software, Alertable, that serves over 1,300 Canadian municipalities and a population of nearly 10 million, please see here: <https://peasi.com/>

## Appendix

### Survey Questions

1. Did you receive the emergency alert test message on your wireless mobile device?  
(Yes, No)

If No:

1. What type of mobile device do you have? (iPhone/iPad (Apple); Android (includes Samsung, Motorola, LG, and other phone brands); Feature-phone (ZTE, Sonim, etc.); Other)
2. Have you recently updated your device to the latest software version? (Yes; No; Don't Know)
3. Who is your wireless provider? (Rogers; Bell; Telus; Shaw; Videotron; Sasktel; Eastlink; Other)
4. Have you received a wireless emergency alert before, either from a test or a real emergency? (Yes, from a past test; Yes, from a real emergency; Yes, from both; No, never)

If Yes:

1. What type of mobile device do you have? (iPhone/iPad (Apple); Android (includes Samsung, Motorola, LG, and other phone brands); Feature-phone (ZTE, Sonim, etc))
  2. Who is your mobile service provider? (Rogers; Bell; Telus; Shaw; Videotron; Sasktel; Eastlink; Other)
  3. Did you click on the website link in the wireless alert message for more details? (Yes, there was a link and I clicked it; No, there was a link but I didn't click it; No link was available)
  4. Have you received a wireless emergency alert before, either from a test or a real emergency? (Yes, from a past test; Yes, from a real emergency; Yes, from both; No, never)
2. Did you receive the emergency alert test message any other way? Check all that apply. (Radio; Television; Social Media; Public alert app (ie. Alertable, The Weather Network, Alberta Emergency Alert, SaskAlert, etc.); None of the above)
  3. Did you understand the instructions in the emergency alert test message? (Yes; No; Partially, they were a little confusing)
  4. What Province/Territory were you in when the test message was sent?
  5. If you could improve one thing with emergency alerts, what would it be?
  6. How and when do you think the Alert Ready system should be used?


## Alert Ready Test Messages

Province/Territory	Test Message
Alberta	<a href="https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260271">https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260271</a>
British Columbia	<a href="https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260277">https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260277</a>
Manitoba	N/A
New Brunswick	<a href="https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260251">https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260251</a>
Newfoundland and Labrador	<a href="https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260248">https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260248</a>
Northwest Territories	<a href="https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260257">https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260257</a>
Nova Scotia	N/A
Nunavut	N/A
Ontario	N/A
Prince Edward Island	<a href="https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260258">https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260258</a>
Quebec	N/A
Saskatchewan	<a href="https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260270">https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260270</a>
Yukon	<a href="https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260278">https://alertable.ca/#/details/2022/260278</a>




## Sample Alert Ready Wireless Public Alert Test Messages

Sample test alerts that were seen by the public on LTE compatible wireless devices:

**EMERGENCY ALERT /** 2m ago  
**ALERTE D'URGENCE**  
 **TEST TEST TEST - No action is required. This is a scheduled TEST of the British Columbia Emergency Alerting System, issued by Emergency Management BC. If this had been an actual emergency, this message would include instructions to help keep you and your community safe. For further information visit <https://www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca>. This TEST is for all of BC. No action is required.**

**EMERGENCY ALERT/ALERTE D'URGENCE**  
This is only a TEST. If this had been an actual emergency or threat, you would now hear instructions that would assist you to protect you and your family. Take a moment to consider your own readiness to respond and talk to your household about how ready you would have been if this alert were real.

**OK**

**EMERGENCY ALERT /** 49m ago  
**ALERTE D'URGENCE**  
 This is only a TEST. If this had been an actual emergency or threat, you would now hear instructions that would assist you to protect you and your family. Take a moment to consider your own readiness to respond and talk to your household about how ready you would have been if this alert were real.

Presidential alert

TEST TEST TEST - No action is required. This is a scheduled TEST of the British Columbia Emergency Alerting System, issued by Emergency Management BC. If this had been an actual emergency, this message would include instructions to help keep you and your community safe. For further information visit <https://www.emergencyinfbc.gov.bc.ca>. This TEST is for all of BC. No action is required.

May 4, 1:55 PM

OK

EMERGENCY ALERT / ALERTE D'URGENCE

1m ago



TEST TEST TEST - No action is required. This is a scheduled TEST of the British Columbia Emergency Alerting System, issued by Emergency Management BC. If this had been an actual emergency, this message would include instructions to help keep you and your community safe. For further information visit <https://www.emergencyinfbc.gov.bc.ca>. This TEST is for all of BC. No action is required.