

Eric D. Batista
City Manager



City of Worcester

January 13, 2026

Attachment for Item #11.14 A

TO THE WORCESTER CITY COUNCIL

COUNCILORS:

I respectfully submit the attached communication relative to the status of ALERTWorcester, as received from Charles R. Goodwin, Commissioner of the Department of Emergency Communications and Management, and forwarded for the information of your Honorable Body.

In November, ALERTWorcester was disabled after the software platform that powered the system, CodeRED, experienced a cybersecurity breach. However, prior to this cybersecurity incident, the Department of Emergency Communications and Management had already begun the process of evaluating replacement solutions with the focus being on expanding our notification capabilities and identifying enhanced features that would benefit our evolving community needs.

The Department of Emergency Communications and Management has selected a new software platform, Genesys Alert, which will offer several improvements over the prior system. These improvements include subscription-based non-emergency alerts, a mobile app and community website for viewing alerts and notifications, automated weather alerts, Esri mapping integration, and improved abilities to provide geo-targeted notifications throughout the community.

At this time, Commissioner Goodwin is finalizing a contract with Genesys and will soon begin system implementation, configuration, and testing. Additional updates will be provided to City Council as the municipality prepares to relaunch ALERTWorcester with its expanded capabilities and improved resilience over the coming weeks.

Respectfully submitted,

Eric D. Batista
City Manager



The City of Worcester

Department of Emergency Communications & Management
Charles R. Goodwin, Commissioner
2 Coppage Drive, Worcester, MA 01603
P| 508-799-8606 F| 508-799-1389
communications@worcesterma.gov

To: Eric D. Batista, City Manager
From: Charles R. Goodwin, Commissioner
Date: January 13, 2026
Re: Informational Communication Relative to the Status of ALERTWorcester

I am writing to provide an informational update regarding the municipality's ALERTWorcester community notification system and the progress that has been made to replace the platform that previously supported it.

In November 2025, the ALERTWorcester community notification system was disabled after the software platform that powered the system, CodeRED, experienced a cybersecurity breach. Following this incident, the vendor that owned and operated the software determined that the affected system could not be recovered or restored to service, necessitating its permanent shutdown.

Prior to this cybersecurity incident, and independent of it, the Department of Emergency Communications and Management had already begun the process of evaluating replacement options for the ALERTWorcester system. In October 2025, the Purchasing Department formally solicited bids for a new community notification platform after determining that a newer system with enhanced features and flexibility would better serve Worcester's growing and evolving community needs.

At the end of November 2025, following a competitive review process, Genasys Alert was selected as the new software platform to support ALERTWorcester. The municipality is currently in the process of finalizing a contract with Genasys, after which implementation and system configuration will begin.

Highlights of the New Genasys Alert Platform

The Genasys Alert platform offers several improvements over the prior system, including:

- **Subscription-Based Non-Emergency Alerts:**
Residents will no longer be subscribed to all non-emergency notifications by default. Instead, community members will have the opportunity to subscribe only to the non-emergency alert categories they wish to receive. Some examples include:

- Trash and Recycling Notifications
- Street Construction and Road Work Updates
- Parking Bans and Snow-Related Notifications
- Leaf Collection and Seasonal Public Works Updates

- **Genasys Protect Mobile App and Website:**

Residents will have access to the Genasys Protect mobile app and community website, where they can receive officials alerts and updates instead of the traditional phone call or text message if they choose to. With the app, users add an address or point of interest that the app uses to keep the user updated with actionable communication. Additionally, the user can enable location-sharing on their phone and receive alerts based on their current location, increasing their awareness of emergencies at home and on-the-go.

- **Automated Weather Alerts:**

Residents will have the opportunity to subscribe to automated weather alerts through the new platform, improving the delivery of potential life-saving communication during dangerous weather events.

- **Esri GIS Mapping Integrations:**

Genasys Alert uses Esri ArcGIS maps and data services as their standard mapping product. Through this integration with Esri, our department can use existing mapping data to allow for more precise targeting of critical communications. With this integration, it will allow our emergency management division to have a more complete catalog of structures, landmarks, and critical facilities in the system for enhanced notification zone development and understanding.

- **Geo-Targeted Notifications:**

Notifications can be geo-targeted using freehand polygons, specific boundaries, or by using predefined zones. Data-driven zone notifications can be developed in real-time for daily needs like road closures or events, allowing us to be ready with hyper-precise message targeting when an emergency happens.

- **Acoustic Device Integration Capabilities:**

Genasys Alert allows for integration with 360-degree and directional acoustic devices that could be integrated into the community in the future and allow for highly audible and intelligible outdoor messaging during emergencies, especially to people within the community who have not signed up for alerts. These devices will work even when power and cellular networks are down, with solar power, battery back-up, and satellite connectivity.

These enhancements are intended to improve resident engagement, reduce notification fatigue, and increase participation in ALERTWorcester by allowing individuals to tailor alerts to their

preference. Once the contract with Genasys is finalized, the Department will begin system implementation, configuration, and testing. Additional updates will be provided as the municipality prepares to relaunch ALERTWorcester with expanded capabilities and improved resilience.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Charles R. Goodwin".

Charles R. Goodwin, Commissioner