

TIP 45: Accounts & Passwords

As an IPAWS Alerting Authority, you have access to a powerful tool. You can alert every phone in your county (or for some authorities, every phone in your state). FEMA and the mobile phone carriers put a lot of effort into securing the systems that process these alerts.

Rules of Behavior

You are responsible for securing access to your alerting software. This responsibility is part of the Rules of Behavior in your signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and applies to each individual who has the ability to send alerts. Here are some important highlights from your MOA:

2.3 Interoperable System User Accounts and Passwords

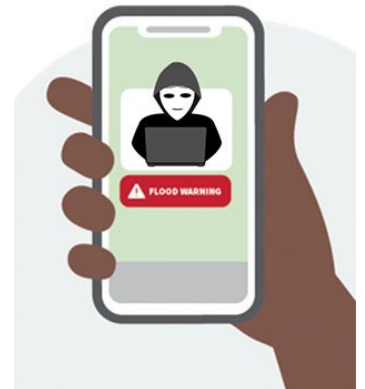
- All users must have a discrete user account ID.
- Accounts and passwords shall not be transferred or shared. *The sharing of both a user ID and associated password with anyone (including administrators) is prohibited.*
- Accounts and passwords shall be protected from disclosure and writing passwords down or electronically storing them on a medium that is accessible by others is prohibited.
- Users are required to change their passwords at least once every 90 days.
- Passwords must be promptly changed whenever a compromise of a password is known or suspected.

So what?

So what if you use a weak password? What if you share credentials with coworkers? What if you're using the same password for the last three years?

Compromised credentials can result in a very dangerous situation, can result in real casualties, and can decrease public trust in a critical emergency service.

Please do your part to protect this service. Follow the Rules of Behavior concerning the security of your system access. Change your password frequently. Don't enable the "remember me" option at login. And **don't share credentials**. *Know who has access to your alerting software. We're counting on you!*



The Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) is FEMA's national system for local alerting that provides critical safety information through mobile phones using Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), to radio and TV via the Emergency Alert System (EAS), NOAA Weather Radio via Non-Weather Emergency Messages (NWEM), and on digital media via the IPAWS All-Hazards Information Feed.



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