

AS Hurricane season 2012 begins, Aransas County, the City of Rockport, and the Town of Fulton are proud to announce a NEW partnership with the Coastal Plains Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) to launch the FirstCall Emergency Notification system. The feature rich FirstCall will replace the current REV 911 mass call system. The \$25,000.00 cost is being funded by the Coastal Plains Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) and when activated will be used to notify residents of critical information such as severe weather, utility disruptions, road closures, missing person alerts, and natural disasters.

FirstCall provides officials with the ability to immediately send important information to residents using several different methods. For example, using FirstCall local emergency planners can call approximately 5,000 phone lines a minute, allowing the entire community to be contacted with specific, timely information in a matter of minutes. “One of the greatest strengths of FirstCall is its ability to send messages through a wide variety of methods. Those methods include:

- Traditional landline telephones
- Cell phones
- SMS text messaging
- Email
- TTY/TDD devices

Another important feature of the system is that officials can call the entire community or just part of one block using simple, map-based drawing tools. FirstCall also gives officials the ability to allow citizens to select a translation of the message from English into another language such as Spanish or Vietnamese.

Citizens with caller ID on their phones should take note that the caller name that appears is “FirstCall” and that the call will have a 361 area code. If a recipient of a call wants to hear the message again, calling the phone number that appears on the caller ID will give residents the opportunity to listen to the call again.

Property Owners and Residents **MUST register** with the system in order to receive messages from FirstCall. There are two methods in which to register

- Online at <https://alertregistration.com/AransasCoTx/>.
This link can also be found at www.fultontexas.org www.aransascounty.org and www.cityofrockport.com. or
- By telephone at (866) 484-3264

At registration residents can choose to enter up to a combined total of five different phone numbers or email addresses linked (geo coded) to a property within Aransas County. “With a variety of ways to be contacted, property owners and residents can be confident of receiving critical information affecting their community and property, including those property owners whose permanent residence is not in Aransas County.

Officials note that FirstCall is free and extremely reliable; however, users should be aware that their individual cell phone and Internet provider service package will dictate if they will receive a fee with normal service or use. In addition, interruptions to land lines cell phone or Internet service for whatever reason are outside the control of Aransas County, the City of Rockport, and the Town of Fulton. Finally, registration in the FirstCall emergency notification system is not a total absolute guarantee that you will receive any or all emergency messages sent but one of several tools used to alert the population of an emergency. Citizens are also urged to continue to monitor local news, weather reports and other Official sources for additional official information and warnings.

Residents can contact Lt. Larry Sinclair at (361) 790-1134 if they have questions or need assistance with FirstCall.