

Urban Drainage and Flood Control District  
EMWIN / Newsrouter Workshop Notice  
November 5, 2002

**Date:** November 13, 2002  
**Time:** 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM  
**Location:** State EOC (Colorado OEM, Camp George West,  
15075 South Golden Road, Building #120)

**Background**

In June of 2001, the Houston, Texas metropolitan area was hit hard by Tropical Storm Allison. Heavy rainfall associated with that storm caused the worst urban flood disaster in U.S. history (*22 fatalities; \$5 billion in property damage; 70,000 homes & 95,000 vehicles affected; massive traffic standstill; continuous media coverage*). Soon after, Harris County agencies collaborated to implement what may be considered one of the best and most cost effective weather and emergency information dissemination systems in the nation. Local officials and system developers from Harris County, Texas have accepted an invitation to come to Denver to describe what happened during T.S. Allison and discuss their current emergency operations and notification programs.

On July 18, 2002, the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District hosted a routine meeting with local agencies to discuss the summer flood potential and notification services associated with the District's flash flood prediction program and ALERT system operations. At that meeting Bob Glancy (NWS-Boulder) described an NWS service known as EMWIN "Emergency Managers Weather Information Network" and talked about the possibility for local agencies or other interested parties to develop rebroadcast capabilities. With such a system in place, local emergency managers and support agencies could have continuous real-time access to EMWIN products for a very low one-time cost. This idea was appealing to those in attendance and an EMWIN Task Force was subsequently formed to advise the District on whether such a system should be developed for the 7-county District region. Having personal knowledge of Houston's system, Kevin Stewart suggested that a full-day workshop be held to provide a forum for interacting with Houston officials and to help task force members formulate a consensus. It was also acknowledged that an emergency notification program like Houston's would apply to many hazards, not just floods.

Local EMs have known for some time that Denver's Metropolitan Emergency Telephone System (METS) is nearing the end of its useful life. Internet or Intranet-based notification services may now prove to be a reliable and workable substitute for antiquated METS technology. Houston's experience may help local officials determine if this is true or whether other alternatives should be investigated.

The District's interest in this is limited to the business of effectively communicating critical flood-related information (*rainfall/flood predictions, watches, warnings, real-time rain & stream data, etc.*) to local government agencies within the District. The District does, however, recognize the importance of the all-hazards warning process in providing its services and is offering this workshop to local partners in an effort to maintain and improve this process. Task Force members felt that many EMs in Colorado would be interested in this workshop and should be invited. The Front Range Emergency Management Forum was identified as an appropriate group to invite to this workshop given the short notice.

**R.S.V.P.**

Anyone interested in attending this workshop should send an email to [kstewart@udfd.org](mailto:kstewart@udfd.org) or call Kevin Stewart at **303-455-6277**. Please provide your agency name, mailing address and phone number.



## Urban Drainage and Flood Control District EMWIN / Newsrouter Workshop for Colorado Front Range Emergency Managers

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### A G E N D A

- 8:30-8:45 Introductions & Opening Remarks (*Kevin Stewart, UDFCD*)
- 8:45-9:00 Colorado EAS/Emergency Alert System Committee (*Larry Mooney, NWS*)
- 9:15-10:15 Session I: EMWIN—Emergency Managers Weather Information Network  
National Weather Service Support (*Bob Glancy, NWS*)  
EMWIN Houston (*Jim Robinson, Harris County Appraisal District*)
- 10:15-10:30 Break
- 10:45-11:45 Session II: Houston's Internet-based Newsrouter Services  
Harris County Emergency Operations (*Frank Gutierrez, Harris County OEM*)  
System Development & Support (*David Read, Read Communications*)
- 11:45-1:00 Lunch (*catered, informal discussion opportunities*)
- 1:00-2:30 Open Forum: Q&A Session with Presenters, Group Discussions
- 2:30-3:00 Break
- 3:00-4:00 EMWIN Task Force Consensus/Recommendations

NOTE: Depending on participation, the afternoon session may be shortened. The 3-hour time block is intended to allow the task force to reach a consensus if possible and provide District staff with their recommendations.