

# Government Emergency Messages On Your Cellphone: Valuable Information, or an Attempt to Scare You Into Submission?

By [Washington's Blog](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

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As I [explained](#) Monday, the Neoconservatives used fear to scare people into submission. Obama used the emotions of “hope” and “change” to rally his base, but has now largely abandoned those themes in favor of fear.

Indeed, as the Boston Herald [notes](#), President Obama will soon be able to reach out and scare the dickens out of you wherever you are:

President Obama could soon have the ability to personally text message every single cell-phone-toting American — whether they like it or not — with “critical emergency alerts” under a new federal program that civil libertarians and political opponents say is a Big Brother-like intrusion posing a high risk of political abuse.

Federal officials in New York yesterday unveiled the three-tiered emergency alert system that would blast messages about Amber Alerts, impending weather disasters and terror threats to mobile devices.

Cell-phone users could opt out of most alerts if they want to, but not the texter-in-chief’s presidential pages.

“It’s like the state rep sending out mailings about how wonderful they are,” said Tad Kasperowicz of the Quincy Tea Party. “President Obama says, ‘Here come the high winds and the thunderstorms’ and it’s not really an emergency, but, hey, he gets his name out to every cell phone in the area. I can see that. Absolutely. There’s potential for abuse there.”

A special chip, which some smartphones already have, allows the phone to receive the messages. All phones will be required to have to the chip by next year.

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Officials hope to have the alert system up and running in New York and Washington, D.C. by the end of the year and ultimately installed throughout the country.

Of course, the emergency alerts could hypothetically be useful, if used sparingly, only in real emergencies, and only in a way which helps people. But given that the government has used claims of “national security” to effect all sorts of shenanigans, it’s hard to believe that the system would not be used for political purposes. See [this](#), [this](#), [this](#), [this](#) and [this](#).

(Remember that peaceful protest is now considered “low-level terrorism”, as shown [here](#), [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).)

Indeed, [fear is the main tool](#) which governments have to motivate, pacify and control their people.

And as the Herald points out, the new emergency chips might do more than just receive incoming messages:

Some critics worry about the government’s ability to identify cell phone users by location — officials can limit alerts to customers in a specific radius.

“If you can send a message to people based on their location, you can identify or pinpoint them based on their location,” said Marc Rotenberg of the Electronic Privacy Information Center. “We may need to look at this a little more carefully.”

“I always like hearing from my government,” said Cambridge civil liberties attorney Harvey Silverglate. “But I’m awfully curious what else this chip can do.”

If you want to go down the rabbit hole regarding the implications of this new program and similar programs, [read this](#).

And see this:



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