

Effective public alerting about hazards has never been more urgent. Severe weather, fires and floods, dangerous goods incidents and even acts of terrorism are real life scenarios in Canada. Often, response authorities have little time to warn those in close range to take necessary safety precautions.

As a mutual aid emergency response organization, Mutual Aid Alberta supports WPAS and is urging individuals to make their voice heard on the issue. "People today are mobile - on the move, and cellular technology keeps pace with them," says Shell Clarke, Chair of Mutual Aid Alberta. "Whether it's a flood in Alberta or a tornado in Ontario - if your phone is there, an alert would appear on it. In our region, WPA enhances safety not only for residents, but also thousands of people who work at local industries, or drive through our communities each day."

In 2014, 55% of Canadians owned smart phones. That number rose to 68% over 2015, which makes mobile devices the leading choice for delivering alerts.

"Participation of Wireless Service Providers is critical in order to have success. As wireless customers, this is something we all should expect; however, unless public support is demonstrated in the CRTC process, it may be several years before it becomes a reality. That simply isn't good enough when the technology is here, now," Clarke cautions.

People are mobile. Alerts should be too.

