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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Heart of Texas Council of Governments**

### **EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM STAY SAFE – BE INFORMED**

WACO, TEXAS – Disasters and emergency incidents can and do occur every day throughout our country. The recent tornado that struck the city of Franklin occurred without much warning. Would you like to receive calls or notifications provided from the national weather service? What about other local emergencies such as hazardous chemical spills, wildland fires, hostage situations, flooding, fugitive alerts, even boil water notices from your local officials? Well you can! The Heart of Texas Council of Governments (HOTCOG) partners with our region's six counties: Bosque, Falls, Freestone, Hill, Limestone, McLennan and their cities to provide such alerts and notifications.

The HOTCOG Emergency Notification System has a database of phone numbers for many of the residents and businesses in our six counties. However, these are land line phones and many citizens today only use cell phones. Therefore, it is important that all citizens register their cell phone numbers and address information if they desire to receive future alert messages from our emergency notification system. Citizens can register for phone, text and email messages and must list their physical address(s).

Steps to learn more or register your information for the system are as follows:

- Go to <http://www.hotready.com> on your computer, iPad or smartphone.
- Click on the "large phone or the Emergency Notification System" icon.
- Read about the program and register by clicking on the "Register for Emergency Alerts" icon at the bottom of the page.
- Select your county from the drop down list and then click the "Continue to Registration" tab.
- IF YOU HAVE NOT REGISTERED PREVIOUSLY click on the "Sign-Up" link at the top of the page.
- Don't forget to select the weather alerts that you wish to receive. There are several to choose from!
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All contact information provided, including phone numbers are not shared or released to the public or other agencies.

The Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness program of the Heart of Texas Council of Governments is an all-hazard citizen preparedness initiative working with your local agencies.

*If you would like more information about the Heart of Texas Regional Notification System you can contact your local county emergency management coordinator or the HOTCOG Emergency Preparedness Program at 254-292-1800 or e-mail [ENS@hot.coq.tx.us](mailto:ENS@hot.coq.tx.us).*