September 1, 2009

Dear Special Needs Service Provider:

The New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) is excited to invite your agency to be part of our special needs outreach initiative, the Advance Warning System (AWS). Through AWS, agencies receive timely messages from OEM about emergency incidents which are designed for people with special needs. This information helps your agency and your clients plan for and respond to emergencies in New York City.

As an AWS member, in addition to receiving real-time emergency notifications and alerts through email, your agency will gain access to the new AWS website, which supports agencies with additional hazard-specific information and planning tools. (For more information on the Advance Warning System and its website, please see the attached overview.)

To include your agency in AWS, use the attached form and email the following information to abelisle@oem.nyc.gov

- Agency name (and abbreviation, if applicable)
- Address
- Primary point of contact (Name and title)
- Contact's email address and phone number

OEM will continue to work closely with your contracting agency through the Advance Warning System and you should look to them for guidance on policies and procedures during emergencies. In a few weeks, your point of contact will receive an email about access to the AWS website. If you have any questions, please contact me at 718-422-8431.

Thank you for your participation in this project.

Sincerely,

Aaron Belisle
Special Needs Coordinator
New York City Office of Emergency Management

cc: Dina Maniotis
     Director of Human Services
     New York City Office of Emergency Management

Advance Warning System Overview

New York City's Office of Emergency Management (OEM) designed the Special Needs Advance Warning System (AWS) to alert individuals to various types of hazards in New York City that may affect their independence and their daily lives. AWS messages are sent out about events like hazardous weather, utility or transportation disruptions, public health emergencies and incidents requiring evacuation. The messages reach people with special needs through their service providers. These agencies have developed trusted relationships with their clients and can tailor the emergency information to support their specific needs. This information helps agencies prepare for potential emergencies and empowers their clients to act in a way that is most appropriate for them.

Advance Warning System Website

OEM and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) partnered to expand the reach of the Advance Warning System and developed the AWS website. The website allows AWS partner agencies to receive messages about emergencies and access tools to support their organizational planning. Interested agencies become involved with AWS through website registration. Any New York City agency that provides services to clients with special needs can register and use the AWS website to receive emergency and preparedness information, provide contact information to OEM, and participate in surveys.

Agencies with website membership have the ability to:

- Receive real-time notifications and alerts through e-mail
- Gain access to preparedness and event-specific documents and links
- Self-register and maintain contact information and agency service data for use by OEM, DOHMH and other AWS agencies
- Search a database of other Special Need Providers in New York City to foster relationships with similar providers
- Participate in surveys that help inform planning and response efforts for your agency and the populations you serve

The AWS Website is http://advancewarningsystemnyc.org/. If you're interested in singing up your agency to be part of the Advance Warning System, contact Aaron Belisle at abelisle@oem.nyc.gov.

New York City Office of Emergency Management
165 Cadman Plaza East
Brooklyn, New York, 11201

Advance Warning System Website Registration Form

Completing the form will provide your agency with access to the AWS website and its messaging found at http://advancewarningsystemnyc.org/.

Instructions: Please enter the contact information for the individual that will be receiving emergency information and accessing the website. Only one contact point per location is needed. Additional contacts can be added after your agency gains access to the website.

Contact information may be faxed to Aaron Belisle at 718-422-8454, sent by email to abelisle@oem.nyc.gov, or mailed to the address above.

Agency Name: (Headquarters)	Abbreviation (if applicable)
Address:	
Primary Point of Contact:	Street City State Zip Code
Contact Email:	First Name Last Name Title
Contact Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):	

If your agency has more than one facility within the 5 boroughs, please provide address and contact information for each location. You may include additional sheets by copying this form, if necessary.

Additional Location (if applicable)	
Agency Name:	Abbreviation (if applicable)
Address:	
Point of Contact:	Street City State Zip Code
Contact Email:	First Name Last Name Title
Contact Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx):	