

CASE STUDY FOR **ALAMEDA COUNTY CALIFORNIA**

STRENGTHENING EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS in Alameda County, California

Situation

Alameda County, with a population of 1.7 million residents, faces significant challenges in effectively managing and responding to natural and manmade disasters. The region's susceptibility to earthquakes, specifically along the Hayward Fault, and the recurring threat of wildfires, demanded a robust early warning system and comprehensive evacuation management strategy.

In 2020, the SCU Complex fire burned 396,624 acres across five counties including Alameda County. This further highlighted the need for a regional approach. In addition, scientists are concerned about the Hayward fault for its potential to trigger devastating earthquakes. This fault spans approximately 74 miles through Alameda County and historical data indicates major earthquakes strike every 150 years, with the last in 1868.



Problem

Despite being aware of these significant natural disaster risks, Alameda County lacked a cohesive and efficient emergency preparedness and response plan. The existing infrastructure and protocols were insufficient to address the dynamic nature of emergencies. **The absence of a centralized system for real-time alerts and evacuation management** made residents and communities vulnerable to the impacts of earthquakes and wildfires. As a result, there was an urgent need to address these deficiencies to mitigate risks and protect lives and property effectively.

Solution

Following the SCU Complex fire, the Alameda County Evacuation Sub-Committee took a proactive approach to evacuation management and became one of **the first Genasys Protect customers**. In parallel the City of Berkeley, a large entity within the county, attended the commissioning ceremony for the Genasys ACOUSTICS implementation in the nearby City of Mill Valley and decided to deploy their own system.



The City of Berkeley, UC Berkeley, and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (LBNL) planned for a system that included 22 ACOUSTICS outdoor voice activated speaker nodes strategically placed throughout the city (15 ACOUSTICS sites), with specific focus on key institutions like UC Berkeley (4 ACOUSTICS sites) and Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory (3 ACOUSTICS sites). **All ACOUSTICS nodes are activated using Genasys Protect** which can also send alerts via IPAWS, SMS, voice, email, and more.



Together, multiple agencies across Alameda County started working together to deploy Genasys Protect, finalizing evacuation zones, locating shelters, understanding road networks, and running cross-agency drills. Communication zones facilitate decision-making, cross-agency collaboration, and targeted communications. With pre-planned evacuation zones and the Genasys Protect mobile app, the system allowed for rapid message formation and delivery of targeted alerts across Alameda County including the ACOUSTIC nodes in Berkeley. Each entity can operate independently, while the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) of Alameda County has full access and the capability to issue alerts across all agencies.

Results

Results of implementing the Genasys Protective Communications platform in Alameda County, along with collaborative efforts from key institutions, have led to significant improvements in emergency preparedness and response capabilities. The integration of **ACOUSTICS nodes, and Genasys Protect** has enhanced overall disaster management, creating earthquake-resilient infrastructure and streamlined communication during emergencies. With pre-planned evacuation zones and mobile app integration, the Genasys Protect system ensures the safety of **1.7 million** residents. Alameda County and its partners can now reliably plan, execute, and recover from natural and man-made disasters, serving as a model for other regions. Additionally, the City of Berkeley has established a comprehensive outdoor alerting system and improved wildfire prevention and preparedness through the Protect Platform, enhancing community safety and resilience.

Alameda County Know Your Zone

<https://youtu.be/igW7cdO-vG4?si=nnE8GNb4yqCjz-LH>

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