

## Important Emergency Alerts Update 11/26/2022

*This is one of a series of articles provided by the Oakmont Technology Learning Center on the use of technology by seniors.)*

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The City of Santa Rosa is going to a new alert system called CivicReady on Dec. 16. There are new Oakmont residents who weren't here for the 2017 and 2020 fires and evacuations longer than a week, so it's time for an update on the various emergency alert systems. For long-time Oakmonters, this may seem like a topic that's been beaten to death, but emergency alert resources have evolved rapidly in the past two years, so an update is warranted.

Fire season is almost year-round in California with the drought, though the recent rains have lessened our risk. It's time to get your "toolkit" ready for next year. There isn't any one app to rely on for alerts - multiple sources of information are needed. The alerts below will give you enough data to decide whether it's time to evacuate early before mandates lead to gridlock traffic.

**CivicReady.** The City of Santa Rosa is transitioning its alert services from Nixle to CivicReady on Dec. 16. To sign up, go to <https://www.srcity.org/3796/CivicReady>. You will be asked whether you want to receive alerts via text, e-mail, or voice (phone). Then you will receive a verification e-mail to confirm your sign-up. Remember, this is only for Santa Rosa city alerts, and Oakmont is within the city.

*CivicReady is only replacing Nixle within the City of Santa Rosa and Oakmont is within the city. SoCoAlert remains Santa Rosa's primary alerting system for large-scale emergencies. The City of Santa Rosa uses multiple notifications and warning systems to ensure emergency information is delivered to the people who need the information.*

**SoCo Alert and Nixle.** To sign up for county alerts, go to <https://socoemergency.org/get-ready/sign-up/#signup>. Sonoma County Sheriff's office uses Nixle. Napa County does an excellent job of consolidating all its alerts on Nixle. Napa Nixles are not to be ignored - as the crow flies, Napa is less than 10 miles from Oakmont. Our recent Oakmont evacuations were from fires starting in Napa County.

The following are excellent apps to also have in your toolkit for emergency information:

**Watch Duty.** This app provides real-time information about nearby fires, fire movement, and firefighting efforts, often including photos when available.

**Windy.** This professional weather app that provides real-time, detailed weather forecasts. A major benefit for fire season is its display of current and forecasted wind speed and direction. [www.windy.com](http://www.windy.com)

**Pulse Point.** This is a free 911-connected app that sends alerts in real-time on events that are being responded to by fire departments and emergency medical services.

**PG&E.** When there is a red-flag warning, [pge.com](http://pge.com) is a good resource to find out if there will be Public Safety Power Shutdowns (PSPS) in Oakmont.

**Twitter.** This app has been a bit of a mess since Elon Musk bought it earlier this month, so it's not clear where it's going for the long haul. However, PG&E, CalFire and other fire monitors use this free app to put out alerts and is often where they post first.

And a reminder: along with go-bags, don't forget to have data, pictures, and documents backed up and know how to use your cell phone as a WiFi hotspot when power is out.

An electronic copy of this article with clickable links can be found at [oakmont-learning.org](http://oakmont-learning.org) as well as the following previously published OTLC emergency alerts articles: 8/13/22, 4/9/22, 8/14/21, 4/10/21 and 2/13/21.