

WEATHERBLAST

You can't control the weather.  
But you can be prepared for it.

Protect your customers, employees and property from sudden lightning, hailstorms, flooding and tornadoes.

Every year, severe weather causes untold billions of dollars worth of damage – a figure the Pew Center on Global Climate Change predicts will only continue to rise as global warming continues.

Retailers are particularly vulnerable to sudden, unpredictable weather such as floods, hailstorms, high winds and tornadoes. Shopping carts can damage vehicles. Signs and outdoor merchandise become projectiles. Plate glass windows shatter. Blindsided by a sudden storm, hundreds or thousands of customers or employees could possibly be injured or worse.

WeatherBlast from Send Word Now® provides precision-targeted early warning notifications, allowing store managers to initiate severe weather protocols, to guide customers to safe locations, and to secure outdoor displays, merchandise, and assets.

**WEATHERBLAST ALERTS ARE:**

Powered by WeatherBug™ – with more than 8,500 weather stations providing fine-grained data targeted with more precision than ZIP codes – precise within 5 square miles.

Customizable and targeted – so recipients can choose the kinds of alerts they need and receive only those that are relevant. Alerts can be pre-loaded with call to action instructions such as: "Stay inside," "Secure outdoor signage and displays," or even "Contact the Emergency Operations Center immediately."

Triggered automatically – no human action or intervention required. As the severe weather events occur, alerts are delivered automatically.

Multimodal – receive both voice and text alerts via landlines, cell phones, pagers, PDA, email and BlackBerry PIN.



For more information or to request a demonstration, please call Send Word Now at (800) 388-4796 or e-mail us at: [weatherblast@sendwordnow.com](mailto:weatherblast@sendwordnow.com)

# The Wal-Mart Tornado



On February 17, 2008, an F-3 tornado struck the Wal-Mart store in Prattville, Alabama. The store suffered significant damage. But no lives were lost. Here's the story of what happened... and what, fortunately, did not.

In 2006, Wal-Mart Director of Emergency Management Jason Jackson was looking for a way to enhance the safety of customers and associates in the event of tornadoes, microbursts and other severe weather events.

Having participated in the management of Wal-Mart's business continuity operations during and after Hurricane Katrina, Jackson recognized the importance of giving stores advance warning of severe weather –

We suffered what I would term 'extreme' damage at the facility from a merchandise, asset, and structure standpoint, but lost no lives. This is why I call the Send Word Now weather notification system a success.

especially weather phenomena that can appear suddenly with little or no advance warning. His objective was to protect lives, property and inventory and minimize Wal-Mart's liabilities.

At the time, alerting stores was done the old-fashioned way – by phone call from a Wal-Mart emergency manager to the store manager's office. Each individual store that might be affected by the severe weather required its own call. And if the store manager wasn't sitting at his desk – a frequent occurrence in the busy retail environment – the message would be left with the operator, who would have to track down the manager and deliver it.

### A Best-of-Breed Real-Time Weather Alert Solution

Searching for a better solution, Jackson realized he had some unusual requirements.

First off, the data had to be very narrowly targeted; phenomena such as tornadoes occur in a very small geographic area. Second, the information had to be delivered to all manner of communications devices in real time. The service would have to be able to provide the alerts to multiple endpoints including cellphones, pagers and PDA's.

In the end, Jackson chose Send Word Now's WeatherBlast, powered by WeatherBug.

"We realized that when you have a major event, like dozens of tornadoes at once, it's impossible for our emergency team to manage that manually," said Jackson. "With WeatherBlast, we've got a product that automatically pushes that information out to our facilities. So they get timely notification."

### WeatherBlast in Action

Jackson's foresight paid off huge dividends in February of 2008, when tornadoes ravaged the southeastern United States. The National Weather Service counted 138 tornadoes that month, breaking the previous record of 83 from 1971.

When a tornado bore down on the Wal-Mart in Prattville, Alabama, Send Word Now's WeatherBlast was ready.

"There is no doubt that this system possibly saved lives this day," says Jackson. "I am thrilled to report that no one was injured or killed on our property. We suffered what I would term 'extreme' damage at the facility from a merchandise, asset, and structure standpoint, but lost no lives. This is why I call the Send Word Now weather notification system a success."

### Send Word Now WeatherBlast Activity

11:27AM

Severe Thunderstorm Warning automatically issued by Send Word Now's WeatherBlast via phone and email to store management

12:34PM

Tornado Watch issued by WeatherBlast via phone and email to store management

1:31PM

Tornado Warning issued by WeatherBlast via phone and email to store management – emergency procedures enacted at store level

2:34PM

Tornado Warning Update issued by WeatherBlast via phone and email to store management – emergency actions continued (shelter in place)

3:06PM

Tornado hits the store