

## What to expect during a Health Alert Network drill

The Health Alert Network (HAN) is an automated, call system used by the State to contact individuals (via telephone, cell phone and email) who have agreed or volunteered to respond to local, state or federal public health emergencies and have provided their personal contact information.

As an emergency responder, your name and contact information has been included in a public health emergency contact list. Quarterly drills of the HAN system will be conducted to help ensure that the HAN system is working properly and to verify that everyone's contact information is correct. Your participation and cooperation in these drills is essential for ensuring rapid and effective responses to real public health emergencies at the local, state or federal level.

### What to Expect During a HAN Alert:

1. After determining that a drill is to be conducted, or an alert needs to be issued in response to a real public health emergency, the HAN automated call-down system will attempt to contact you using your work, home, and cell telephone numbers. The HAN system will also send you a HAN alert message via email, if you provided an email address.
2. When HAN dials one of your phone numbers and the call is answered, either by a person or by an answering machine, the HAN system will play the HAN alert message. The telephone portion of the HAN system is voice-activated. The HAN alert message will only be played if an audible sound is detected by the system, i.e., someone says hello or an answering machine plays its recorded message. When sound is detected by the system, the initial portion of the HAN alert message will be played:

**This is the ND Health Alert Network with an important message. Please push any key on your telephone key pad to hear this message.**

3. Pushing one of the keys on your telephone key pad lets the HAN system know that the call has been answered by a person and not an answering machine.
4. If a key is not pressed following this prompt, the call is ended and the HAN system will then attempt to reach you at the next phone number you provided. If the call is picked up by an answering machine, only the initial portion of the HAN alert message (as shown above) will be recorded on the answering machine. If this happens, and HAN is not successful in reaching you at one of your other phone numbers, check your email to get the HAN alert message.

5. If a key is pressed at this prompt, the HAN system will play a customized message consistent with the purpose of the alert. For example:
  - If the call is a real emergency, the message will ask you to log-on to the North Dakota Department of Health at: <http://www.ndhan.gov/> and read the detailed information about the nature of the emergency with instructions on what you're being asked to do at the bottom of that page.
  - If the call is a drill, the message will clearly be identified as a drill.
    - The message will instruct you to go to <http://www.ndhan.gov/> and find the alert associated with the drill at the bottom half of the web site page and follow the instructions provided. You will be directed a link where you will verify your contact information and your potential availability were this to have been an actual emergency.
    - The message will require you to complete the process described in item six (6)
  - Please remember to confirm your receipt of the telephone alert message as described in item number six (6)
6. At the end of a telephoned alert the HAN system will play the following message:

**To confirm receipt of this message press one - To repeat this message, press two.**

7. Since it's possible that someone other than you might answer a HAN alert call intended for you, it's important to let co-workers, family members, etc. know how you want them to respond. For instance, if your place of employment uses a receptionist to answer incoming phone calls, you might instruct the receptionist to respond to the first and last prompts using the phone's key pad and then immediately relay the message to you.

On the other hand, you may not want one of your children to respond if you have concerns that they might not relay the message to you. Remember, if one of the keys on the phone's key pad is not pressed following the first prompt, the HAN system will end the call and attempt to reach you at one of the other phone numbers you provided.

8. Emailed HAN alerts will also identify the purpose of the message as being either a drill or a real public health emergency. Follow any special instructions provided in the email along with the instructions at the end of the message to confirm receipt of the HAN alert whether it was sent in response to a drill or a real public health emergency.

Confirming the receipt of a telephone alert message by pressing "1" on your phone or confirming an emailed alert by clicking the link provided in the email, is important in drills and real public health emergencies because it lets us know, that the alert message was actually heard or read.