

Title of Nomination: Threat Level Notification System

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**NASCIO Award Nomination**  
**Digital Government: Government to Citizen**  
**Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security State and National Threat**  
**Level Notification System**

**Executive Summary**

*The Problem*

Prior to the implementation of the State and National Threat Level Notification System, Oklahoma had no way to quickly and accurately disseminate information about Homeland Security issues to concerned and interested citizens. The public was forced to laboriously seek out such information, a process that was time consuming and often unreliable.

*The Solution*

On December 19, 2002, the Notification System was made available to Oklahoma's citizens. By signing up on the Office of Homeland Security's Web site in a simple two-step process, subscribers will receive alerts as soon as state and/or national threat levels change. These notifications can be received on any device with e-mail or text messaging capabilities, including computers, cell phones, pagers and personal digital assistants.

The System is greatly enhanced by the presence of the Homeland Security Web site, which contains detailed descriptions of each of the five threat levels as well as an abundance of public information resources and relevant links.

The Notification System applies the basic concept and idea behind Homeland Security at a local level and applies it in an effective and seamless way to its primary element: the people of the state of Oklahoma. Therefore, the system reflects the most basic need, which is to inform the people, taking it to the next level by delivering information rather than requiring it be sought out. With the creation of the System, the Oklahoma Office of Homeland Security demonstrated thought leadership by becoming the first of the 50 states to offer any type of alert system.

*The Response*

Since the System launched, it has been featured in both local and national media coverage and, to date, has generated over 4,000 subscriptions from Oklahoma citizens.

## **Description of the Application**

The State and National Threat Level Notification System pushes threat level alerts to subscribers as soon as the state and/or national threat levels change. Citizens can sign up on a new Oklahoma Homeland Security Web site in a free and simple two-step subscription process. Subscribers can elect to receive alerts on any device with e-mail or text messaging capabilities including computers, cellular phones, pagers and personal digital assistants. In addition, the Notification System is greatly supplemented and advanced by the presence of the Homeland Security Web site. Upon receiving an alert, citizens can visit the Homeland Security site to find detailed descriptions on each of the five threat levels as well as an abundance of public information resources and relevant links.

## **Significance to the Improvement of the Operation of Government**

Every aspect of the Notification System facilitates more efficient government for the citizens of Oklahoma. With a two-step subscription process and instantaneous delivery of information, the timeliness of constituents' knowledge search has been vastly improved. And by creating a centralized source for notification alerts and other Homeland Security resources, Oklahomans have the reassurance of having the most accurate and highest quality information available. Finally, because the System and Web site were developed with turn-key administration and maintainence capabilities, Oklahoma is able to conserve public sector resources and reallocate precious manpower.

## **Benefits Realized for Service Recipients**

- 1. Improved constituent satisfaction through more efficient information transfer.* By creating a subscription interface that is simple to use and providing constituents with the immediate communication of new Homeland Security updates, the Notification System has significantly streamlined citizens' information-gathering process, which had been notably difficult. This effective solution allows Oklahomans the freedom to obtain information they want when and how they want it. Satisfaction with the application is apparent from the 4,000 plus subscribers that have signed up since the System lunched.
- 2. Improved Homeland Security.* The widespread adoption of the System, aided by local and national press coverage, is a clear indicator of the impact that the application has had on Oklahoma's citizens. By drastically improving the delivery and quality of Homeland Security Information, and outstanding problem was solved. The more people that are adequately informed of current developments, the more secure the state and nation will be. And because the Homeland Security Web site has been designated as the official state source of Homeland

Security Information, the Threat Level Notification System possesses the credibility of being the most accurate and reliable source of updates in the state.

### **Measurable Operational Benefits**

The effectiveness is measured by citizen awareness and subsequently the rolling tally of subscribers to the Notification System, available only to the Office of Homeland Security. Direct inquiries or questions about the service have been used to measure the effectiveness and ease of use, resulting in minor modifications in content for aid in the subscription process. Since the System launched in December 2002, the acceptance rate has grown through the support of local and national media coverage resulting in a subscription hike representing more than 4,000 individuals.