

# Leyden RAVE Alert Policy

## Purpose:

RAVE alerts are clear, consistent, actionable, urgent, trustworthy, authorized messages to pre-registered Leyden residents to increase awareness and safety in emergencies. This policy will establish procedures for the use of the RAVE system.

## Background:

The Town of Leyden has implemented a Reverse 911 rapid notification system for distributing emergency messages to the public. The system can notify large numbers of people in a short period of time by several methods: telephone (landline and cell phone), text, email, or TDD. The system used by Leyden is called RAVE, administered through [www.Smart911.com](http://www.Smart911.com)

## General Authorization:

RAVE messages are under the operational authority of the Emergency Management Directors (co-EMDs) during an emergency, with consultation with Select Board. When an emergency is not declared, the Select Board has general authority over RAVE use and assigns day-to-day operations to the emergency management team by way of this policy.

## System Use:

The primary use of the system is for the town to send alerts to the public regarding an emergency situation. Acceptable uses for emergency notification include:

- \* Extreme weather event. e.g. flood, fire, hurricane, winter storm
- \* Search and rescue. e.g. missing child, adult, Amber Alert, escaped fugitive
- \* Man-made disaster. e.g. chemical spill, hazmat emergency, bomb threat
- \* Public Health Emergency
- \* Public Safety evacuations, road closures, or other problems affecting specific areas
- \* Information to Leyden employees

RAVE shall not be used for any non-governmental purpose.

## Message Authorization:

Each individual RAVE message must be pre-approved by two of the following:

1. Public Information Officer (PIO) of the Leyden Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC), and
2. One of the co-EMDs
3. Select Board Chair or designee
4. During Public Health emergencies, the BoH Chair or designee will be consulted

For health-related emergencies, the Board of Health chair or their designee is also required to pre-approve any messaging. This includes all messaging within the broad scope of responsibility and authority of Boards of Health, detailed here: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/board-of-health-manual-of-laws-and-regulations/download>.

### RAVE systems credentials and ability to activate.

For redundancy and to confirm coverage in emergencies, a minimum of three people in town will have technical access and training to send out RAVE messages.

The emergency team should maintain current emergency contact information for these town officials.

No one will send any message until they are assured that the message was authorized consistent with this policy. No one should send out a RAVE message unless they feel like they have sufficient training and understanding of the system to do so competently.

### Guidelines for messaging scope, frequency, and content.

The Leyden LEMC will produce guidelines for what constitutes an emergency RAVE announcement and style guidelines for message content to best serve the purpose of the RAVE message.

### Checklist Quick Reference

The Select Board will draft step-by-step procedures for sending out RAVE messages. This draft will then be edited, approved, and maintained by the LEMC. This checklist will be used to send out messages.

### Database integrity and privacy

It is the responsibility of the Leyden LEMC to recruit Leyden residents to enter contact information and opt-in to receiving notifications within and agreed upon scope. Outdated contact information must be periodically purged from the system.

### Training:

Individuals authorized to activate the RAVE system will be trained in its operation. The training will be based on the vendor's recommendations and the specifics of the installed system. Authorized users will regularly refresh their skills by using the vendor's tutorial resources.

### Testing

As long as it is consistent with communications with subscribers during recruitment efforts, annual testing is acceptable, as is testing to evaluate new features or software. Testing should be pre-announced on the Town website, road sign, Leyden Life, and the Recorder Notebook when at all possible.

### Coordinated use of all Messaging Options

Decisions to use RAVE should be made in concert with other messaging options that we have available, each with strengths and limitations.

1. Town website top banner alert. Background turned from green to red for emergency messages.
2. Town electronic road sign at corner of Brattleboro and Greenfield Roads.
3. LEMC Neighborhood Captains program in development.
4. Leyden Life, The Recorder and any other local print publications deemed necessary
5. Social media updates as warranted
6. Wireless emergency alerts (HAM radio)