

Clearinghouse Rule 06-091

**ORDER OF THE  
DEPARTMENT OF MILITARY AFFAIRS  
DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT  
CREATING RULES  
RELATING TO ESTABLISHING STANDARDS FOR A MUTUAL AID BOX  
ALARM SYSTEM**

**Analysis prepared by the Division of Emergency Management**

The Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs, through its Division of Emergency Management, proposes an order to create WEM 8 relating to the establishment of standards for the adoption of the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System, also known as MABAS, that may be used for deploying fire, rescue and emergency medical services personnel and equipment in a multi-jurisdictional or multi-agency emergency response.

SECTION 1. Chapter WEM 8 is created to read:

**Chapter WEM 8**

**MUTUAL AID BOX ALARM SYSTEM  
STANDARDS AND PROCEDURES**

WEM 8.01	Purpose
WEM 8.02	Definitions
WEM 8.03	Levels of Response
WEM 8.04	Procedure for Providing Mutual Aid
WEM 8.05	Types and Classing of Resources
WEM 8.06	Coordinators
WEM 8.07	Credentialing
WEM 8.08	Limitations on Coverage
WEM 8.09	Compensation
WEM 8.10	Participation

WEM 8.01 PURPOSE. The purpose of this chapter is to establish standards for the adoption of the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System, also known as MABAS, as a mechanism to be used for mutual aid for fire, rescue, and emergency medical services and associated special operational services as required in ss. 166.03 (2) (a) 3, Stats.

WEM 8.02 DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Aiding unit" means a member unit furnishing equipment, personnel or services to a stricken unit.

- (2) “Apparatus guidelines” means apparatus defined and incorporated into the Mutual Aid Box Alarm System General Operating Procedures.
- (3) “Chief officer” means the highest ranking officer within a fire, rescue or emergency medical services unit.
- (4) “Emergency” means an occurrence or condition in a member unit’s territorial jurisdiction which results in a situation of such magnitude or consequence that it cannot be adequately handled by the resources of the stricken unit and such that a member unit determines the necessity and advisability of requesting mutual aid.
- (5) “Emergency medical services system” means the method for establishing a system for the appropriate management for the medical treatment and transport of the public in pre-hospital, interfacility or from facilities or institutions providing health services under s. TRANS Chapter 309 and ss. HFS Chapters 110 through 113.
- (6) “Incident command system” has the same meaning as in s. COMM 30.01(16) and follows the guidelines of the National Incident Management System, also known as NIMS.
- (7) “MABAS, or ‘Mutual Aid Box Alarm System’ box card” means a printed form containing details of departments, specialized personnel and equipment to respond to a given geographical area, target hazard and/or specialized response within a community.
- (8) “MABAS, or ‘Mutual Aid Box Alarm System’ division” means the geographically associated MABAS member units which have been grouped for operational efficiency and representation of those MABAS member units. Each MABAS division shall designate one representative to serve on the statewide MABAS executive board.
- (9) “MABAS or ‘Mutual Aid Box Alarm System’ interdivisional card” means a MABAS box card designated for interdivisional mutual aid, listing a MABAS division’s equipment available to respond based on the type of equipment and location.
- (10) “MABAS or ‘Mutual Aid Box Alarm System’ member unit” means a unit of local government including but not limited to a city, village, town, emergency medical services district or fire protection district having a fire department recognized by the State of Wisconsin or an intergovernmental agency and the units of which the intergovernmental agency is comprised which is a party to the MABAS agreement and has been appropriately authorized by the governing body to enter into such an agreement.
- (11) “MABAS or ‘Mutual Aid Box Alarm System’ region” means the Wisconsin emergency management areas as identified by the Adjutant General under ss. 166.03 (2) 6. (b) 1., Stats.
- (12) “Mutual Aid Box Alarm System”, also known as MABAS, means a definite and prearranged plan whereby response and assistance is provided to a stricken unit by the aiding unit in accordance with the system established and maintained by MABAS member units and amended from time to time. Management oversight of the system is handled by the MABAS executive board.
- (13) “National Incident Management System” or ‘NIMS’,” means a system mandated by Homeland Security Presidential Directive 5 that provides a consistent nationwide approach for federal, state, local and tribal governments; the private sector, and nongovernmental organizations to work effectively and

efficiently together to prepare for, respond to, and recover from domestic incidents, regardless of cause, size, or complexity.

(14) “Stricken unit” means a member unit which requests aid in the event of an emergency.

(15) “WEM or ‘Wisconsin emergency management’ duty officer” means an individual on-call 24 hours and seven days a week and as identified by Wisconsin emergency management’s duty officer roster.

WEM 8.03 LEVELS OF RESPONSE. MABAS coordinates the effective and efficient provision of mutual aid during emergencies, natural disasters, or manmade catastrophes. In recognition of home rule, MABAS is not intended to relieve a community from their responsibilities of providing adequate emergency services for all local emergencies, since all communities should have their own first line of defense. When a community exhausts its resources, MABAS can be activated by the stricken community through a systematic plan at various levels of response:

- (1) A “local response” is an emergency that is a routine day-to-day event utilizing resources listed on a MABAS box card with a minimum of three MABAS alarm levels which is triggered locally by the incident commander on scene.
- (2) A “regional response” is an emergency that has exhausted “local response” capabilities and may utilize up to three MABAS interdivisional cards. A regional response is triggered locally by the incident commander on the scene of an emergency.
- (3) A “state response” is an emergency that has exhausted “regional response” capabilities and may utilize multiple MABAS interdivisional cards. A state response is triggered by a request to the WEM duty officer by the incident commander on the scene of the emergency. Responding resources will be coordinated by the WEM duty officer in coordination with the regional MABAS division coordinator.
- (4) A “national response” is an emergency that has exhausted state resources and is an event of national significance which is triggered by or to the Wisconsin emergency management duty officer through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact under ss. 166.30, Stats.

WEM 8.04 PROCEDURE FOR PROVIDING MUTUAL AID. (1) The MABAS member units authorize their respective chief officer or designee to take necessary and proper action to render or request mutual aid from the member units in accordance with the policies and procedures established and maintained by the MABAS member units. The aid rendered shall be to the extent of available personnel and equipment not required for adequate protection of the territorial limits of the aiding unit.

(2) Whenever an emergency occurs and conditions are such that the incident commander, or designee, of the stricken unit determines it is advisable to request aid under MABAS, shall activate the number of aiding units deemed necessary in accordance with the policy and procedures established and maintained by the MABAS member units.

(3) The chief officer, or designee, of the aiding unit shall take the following action immediately upon being requested for mutual aid:

- a. Determine what equipment, personnel and/or services are requested according to the system maintained by MABAS.
- b. Determine if requested equipment, personnel and/or services can be committed in response to the request from the stricken unit.
- c. Dispatch the predetermined requested equipment, personnel and/or services, to the extent available, to the staging location of the emergency reported by the stricken unit in accordance with the procedure of MABAS.
- d. Notify the stricken unit if any or all of the requested equipment, personnel and/or services cannot be provided.

WEM 8.05 TYPES AND CLASSES OF RESOURCES. All equipment and apparatus provided to the stricken unit shall be compliant with requirements based on National Fire Protection Association standards and s. TRANS 309 at the time of its original construction and shall fall within one of the NIMS vehicle classifications. At the local response level, staffing guidelines shall be based upon the current local policy and practices. At the regional response level, state response level and national response level, personnel provided by aiding units shall comply with all MABAS staffing guideline minimums.

WEM 8.06 COORDINATORS. Each MABAS division shall have one division coordinator available at all times. Each MABAS region shall designate one division in their region to act as the regional coordinator. Each WEM region will have one designated MABAS division as a Wisconsin emergency management regional coordinator.

WEM 8.07 CREDENTIALING. All firefighters responding under MABAS shall meet the training standards and requirements of entry level firefighter trained under s. COMM 30.07. Emergency medical services responders shall have a valid emergency medical services license as defined in s. HFS 110 through 113.

WEM 8.08 LIMITATIONS ON COVERAGE. (1) Personnel dispatched to aid a stricken unit under MABAS shall remain employees of the aiding unit. Personnel rendering aid shall report for direction and assignment at the scene of the emergency to the incident commander or designee of the stricken unit. The aiding unit shall at all times have the right to withdraw any and all aid upon the order of its chief officer or designee, provided that the aiding unit withdrawing such aid shall notify the incident commander of the stricken unit of the withdrawal of such aid and the extent of such withdrawal.

(2) The rendering of assistance under MABAS shall not be mandatory. Aiding units may refuse if local conditions of the aiding unit prohibit response. It is the responsibility of the aiding unit to immediately notify the stricken unit of its inability to respond.

WEM 8.09 COMPENSATION. Equipment, personnel or services provided under MABAS shall be at no charge to the stricken unit. However, any expenses recoverable from third parties and responsible parties shall be equitably distributed among aiding units. Nothing shall operate to bar any recovery of funds from any state or federal agency under existing state and federal laws.

WEM 8.10 PARTICIPATION. Participating agencies in the statewide mutual aid plan must be either a MABAS member unit or have signed a memorandum of understanding directly with MABAS. Failure to do either does not jeopardize WEM duty officer directed responses to a non-participating community.

SECTION 2. EFFECTIVE DATE. This rule shall take effect on the first day of the month following publication in the Wisconsin administrative register as provided in s. 227.22 (2) (intro), Stats.