

Guest Editors:

Hamilton Bean, Ph.D., University of Colorado Denver, USA (hamilton.bean@ucdenver.edu)

Erica Kuligowski, Ph.D., RMIT University, Australia (erica.kuligowski@rmit.edu.au)

Lori Peek, Ph.D., University of Colorado Boulder, USA (lori.peek@colorado.edu)

Jeannette Sutton, Ph.D., University at Albany, SUNY, USA (jsutton@albany.edu)

Michele Wood, Ph.D., California State University, Fullerton, USA (mwood@fullerton.edu)

Call for Papers

Special Collection on the Legacy of Dennis S. Mileti and the Future of Public Alert and Warning Research



We invite submissions to a special collection designed to honor the legacy of renowned disaster researcher, Dennis S. Mileti, and to advance the state of the art in terms of public alert and warning research. Submissions are due by July 31, 2022. Please keep reading for more information regarding the aims, scope, and submission guidelines for the special collection.

Aims & Scope

The aim of this special collection is twofold: (1) to assess the legacy of Dennis S. Mileti's contributions to risk communication research and (2) to explore and advance the future of public alert and warning research, policy, and practice globally. Dr. Mileti was regarded by many of his colleagues as the world's foremost expert on public alert and warning research. Tragically, he died from complications due to COVID-19 in 2021. An esteemed disaster sociologist and former Director of the Natural Hazards Center at the University of Colorado Boulder, Dr. Mileti's influence on the fields of public alert and warning, sustainable hazards mitigation, and human behavior during emergencies is difficult to overstate: It can be seen in the 100+ publications he authored or co-authored over the course of his 50-year career, the thousands of scholarly citations of his work, the engagement of countless practitioners and students he taught or trained, and the public alert and warning policies and practices that his research influenced worldwide. Amid the lingering pandemic, intensifying effects of climate change, and accelerating technological transformations, there is urgent need to take stock of Dr. Mileti's contributions to public alert and warning practice and chart a future path that both honors his legacy and builds upon his pioneering research.

A 2018 FEMA PrepTalk was one of Dr. Mileti's final major public presentations. In that presentation, Dr. Mileti asked, "If I had to address the men and women in our nation who will issue public alerts and warnings in the future, what would I tell them?" He responded to his own question with four answers: (1) focus on public alert and warning for imminent, rapid onset emergencies; (2) remove delay from the warning system (message issuance, reception, and action initiation); (3) conduct planning, training, and drills for public alert and warning; and (4) disseminate public alert and warning messages using a mix of new and old technologies. Researchers are turning their attention to these four interrelated

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approaches, among many others, in response to national as well as global guidance, such as the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

Topics of Interest

We invite authors to submit theoretically-grounded research-based papers on innovative approaches, technologies, policies, and practices that will help to further improve both access to public alert and warning systems for all hazards and the efficacy of those systems and messages in the decades ahead. Topics of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Critical review and assessment of Dr. Mileti’s contributions to public alert and warning research and related fields and disciplines.
- How to improve public alert and warning for imminent, rapid onset emergencies as well as in the context of more complex, slow onset disasters.
- How to improve public alert and warning in increasingly diverse and complex communication ecologies locally or globally.
- How to remove delay from the public alert and warning system—including message issuance, reception, and action initiation.
- The role of demographic characteristics, culture, ideology, economics, politics, and other factors in shaping the development and use of public alert and warning systems.
- Effective approaches to planning, training, and practicing (i.e., drills) for increased situation awareness and public alert and warning readiness.
- The role, influence, and outcomes of new public alert and warning technologies.
- The influence of false, missed, or inaccurate alerts on public perception of hazards and how to turn these “failures” into potential learning opportunities.
- The impact of changes in populations, technologies, climate, and other factors on future public and/or organizational response to alerts and warnings.
- Assessments of public alert and warning infrastructure, public policy, public education, and ethics.
- Innovative methods for measuring and predicting community responses to public alert and warning messages under different environmental, social, and/or technological contexts and disaster scenarios.

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Submission Deadline

The submission deadline for this special collection is July 31, 2022. All submissions must be received via the Natural Hazards Review web portal as described in further detail below.

Submission Guidelines

We invite Forum articles, Technical Notes, Technical Papers, and Case Studies. Article type descriptions (including length limits) and preparation guidelines can be found in “Publishing in ASCE Journals: A Guide for Authors” (<https://ascelibrary.org/doi/book/10.1061/9780784479018>).

Authors should follow the guidelines for ASCE journal submission and submit manuscripts electronically through the Natural Hazards Review’s Editorial Manager website: <https://www.editorialmanager.com/jrnnheng/Default.aspx>.

Additionally, each paper must include a Significance Statement, which explains why the research described in the article is important and details its contribution to the practice of designing or issuing alerts and warnings. The statement should be written in nontechnical language, focus on why the work matters, and provide additional context for why the work is relevant to science, practitioners, policymakers and/or society. The significance statement should be no longer than 250 words and will appear after the Abstract of the published paper. It does not count toward the manuscript word limit.

When submitting, authors should indicate in the submission questions that the paper is being submitted in response to this call for papers for the (“Mileti Special Collection”).

Review Process

Please note that this is an invitation to submit papers for peer review and does not imply acceptance for publication. Papers that do not adhere to the journal guidelines or do not meet minimum scholarly standards will be returned without full peer review. Acceptance of submitted papers depends on the results of the normal refereed peer review process of the journal. All submitted papers will be reviewed by two to three external reviewers.

All accepted papers submitted through this solicitation will be published in regular issues of the journal as they are accepted, and they will be added to a special online collection (which is similar to a print version of a special issue) and will be indexed for citations like other regular journal papers.