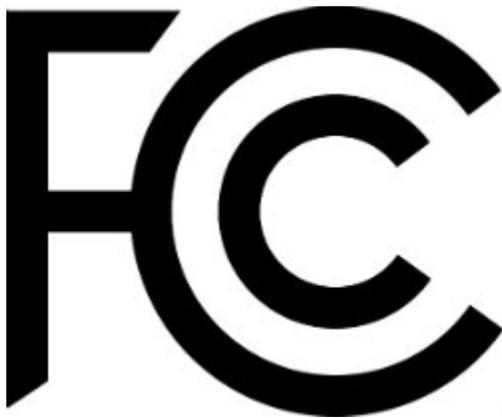




FCC reminds TV Stations to Make Their Emergency Information Accessible



On September 10, 2014 the FCC issued a public [notice](#) reminding video programming distributors, including broadcasters, of their obligation to make emergency information accessible to persons who are deaf, hard of hearing, blind, or visually impaired in accordance with section 79.2 of the Commission's rules. The FCC stated that they issued the public notice because various emergencies over the past year, ranging from a West Virginia chemical spill in January, to the San Diego, California wildfires in May, to a spate of destructive tornadoes in Nebraska, Iowa, and South Dakota in June, underscore the vital nature of compliance with this rule.

The Public Notice states that all video programming distributors (VPDs) that air emergency information are required to make this information accessible. There are no exemptions to section 79.2. In addition, each local broadcast licensee is responsible for complying with section 79.2 regardless of the technology used to deliver its signal to consumers.

In the case of persons who are blind or visually impaired, emergency information that is provided in the video portion of a regularly scheduled newscast, or a newscast that interrupts regular programming, must be made accessible. For emergency information provided in the video portion of programming that is *not* a regularly scheduled newscast or a newscast that interrupts regular programming (e.g., through "crawling" or "scrolling" text during regular programming), the information must be accompanied (preceded) by an aural tone. This tone is intended to alert persons with vision disabilities that the station is providing emergency information, and those persons, therefore, should tune to another source, such as a radio, for more information. Repeating the aural tone at frequent intervals, or at least as often as the content of the crawl or scroll changes, is helpful to viewers who are reliant on these tones.

In addition, TV stations are reminded that **beginning May 26, 2015** they must use a secondary audio stream (channel) to convey televised emergency information aurally, when that information is conveyed visually (*i.e.*, in an on-screen crawl) during video programming other than newscasts. This requirement was adopted in an April 2013 [FCC Accessible Emergency Information Report and](#)

[Order](#) (see [TV TechCheck from April 29, 2013](#)). The information imparted over the secondary audio channel must still follow an aural tone, which can alert consumers who are blind or visually impaired to the presence of an emergency situation, and give them an opportunity to switch to that second audio stream.

For persons who are deaf or hard of hearing, the Public Notice reminds stations that FCC rules require that emergency information provided in the audio portion of the programming be made accessible using closed captioning *or* other methods of visual presentation, including open captioning, crawls or scrolls that appear on the screen. Emergency information provided by these means may not block any closed captioning, and closed captioning may not block any emergency information provided by crawls, scrolls, or other visual means. The "pass through" obligation, generally requiring VPDs to ensure that viewers receive closed captions intact under section 79.1, also applies to emergency information encompassed by section 79.2.

The FCC has fact sheets available on its web site summarizing the closed captioning and access to emergency information rules [here](#), and [here](#).

Layer Receives CEA Technology Leadership Award at Radio Show

NAB Senior Director, Advanced Engineering David Layer was presented with a 2014 Consumer Electronics Association (CEA) Technology Leadership Award during the NRSC's 35th anniversary reception at the 2014 Radio Show, held September 10 - 12 in Indianapolis, Ind. Making this presentation was Mike Bergman, Senior Director Standards & Technology at CEA. Shown in the photo at right are Bergman (at left), Layer (center) and Milford Smith, current NRSC chair (at right).



CEA presents the Technology & Standards Leadership Award each year to one or more individuals for "their commitment to excellence as evidenced by the extent and consistency of their overall, ongoing participation in CEA's Technology & Standards program ... for significant contributions to CEA's Technology & Standards program to advance the state-of-the-art in consumer electronics ... [and] demonstrated industry leadership through active participation."

In his prepared remarks Bergman said: "This year, the NRSC's 35th year, it is appropriate that the award go to someone who has contributed so much to this group, to radio and to radio standards. This individual has been with the NRSC for close to 20 years. When you consider the phrases 'extent and consistency,' 'significant contributions' and 'demonstrated industry leadership,' there is certainly no shortage of names. NRSC is home to a host of award-winning engineering talent."

"But over the past two decades, one individual has contributed many hours to the efforts of the NRSC." Bergman noted that Layer "has participated in a thousand discussions and more; and he has set a standard of excellence by example and by insistence on quality."

Layer, who has been with the NAB since 1995, and is NAB's staff representative to the NRSC, is not the first NAB Technology department staff person to be so honored. In 2012, Art Allison, then Senior Director, Advanced Engineering with NAB (and now retired) was also a recipient of the CEA Technology Leadership Award, for his work with ATSC and CEA standards-setting groups.

NAB Labs Futures Park Solicits Exhibitors

Know someone who might be interested in exhibiting their media-related technology R&D projects at the 2015 NAB Show? NAB Labs is now accepting applications to participate in the 2015 NAB Labs Futures Park at the Las Vegas Convention Center, Las Vegas, Nev., April 13-16, 2015.



NAB Labs Futures Park is a reserved area of the NAB exhibit floor that exclusively features media-related technology R&D efforts in progress around the world. For a quick look at last year's Futures Park, visit nablab.org/projects. The Park is a popular venue for both exhibitors and attendees, and receives considerable press attention every year.

NAB supplies complimentary exhibit space to all organizations accepted for participation in Futures Park. Expressions of interest or questions should be directed to Katy Armstrong at karmstrong@nab.org. Applications for exhibition space must be received on or before December 5, 2014.

Just Released: NAB's Legal Guide to Broadcast Law and Regulation – 6th Edition

To guide the industry in the 21st century, NAB's Legal Department and leading attorneys have prepared the only up-to-date, comprehensive broadcast regulatory publication: *NAB's Legal Guide to Broadcast Law and Regulation*. Known for years as the "voice" for broadcast law, this publication addresses the full range of FCC regulatory issues facing radio and television broadcasters, as well as intellectual property, First Amendment, cable and satellite, and increasingly important online issues. It gives practicing attorneys, in-house counsel, broadcasters and other communications industry professionals practical "how to" advice on topics ranging literally from "a" (advertising) to "z" (zoning).

NAB's Legal Guide to Broadcast Law and Regulation is available to keep you current on changes in the law, significant court decisions, FCC rules, agency policies and applied solutions. Buy it from NABStore.com.

Important Dates and Upcoming Events

[137th International AES Convention](#)

October 9 - 12, 2014

Los Angeles, CA

[2014 IEEE Broadcast Symposium](#)

October 15 - October 17, 2014

San Antonio, TX

[SMPTE Annual Technical Conference](#)

October 20 - October 23, 2014

Hollywood, CA