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News Release

For Immediate Release

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Annual Roanoke County “RoCo Alert” Test Set for Thursday, May 16

(Roanoke County, VA—May 13, 2018) On Thursday, May 16 at approximately 9:00 a.m., Roanoke County’s Emergency Communications Center will test the RoCo Alert emergency notification system. Each year, the County tests the system to ensure the procedures, processes and staff training are up-to-date. To help eliminate any confusion that may occur when the system is tested, local media is being notified in advance about the upcoming test to help inform residents.

The test notification will be done only in areas of north Roanoke County this year (Hollins community).

RoCo Alert works like a “reverse 9-1-1” and allows the County to call every household telephone number in the 9-1-1 Center database in the event of an emergency. RoCo Alert can also be used to call households in a specific area using addresses and GIS mapping technology, depending on public safety needs.

The RoCo Alert system is activated by the County’s public safety agencies, including Police, Fire & Rescue, or the Sheriff’s Office and are issued to warn of imminent threats to lives or property, such as local flooding, wildfire notices, severe weather alerts, evacuation notices, or other public safety warnings.

RoCo Alert allows residents to sign up optional cell phone numbers, email addresses and add additional County addresses to their notifications. For example, residents might want to add their spouse’s work place, a child’s school, or an elderly parent’s home address. If a RoCo Alert emergency notice is issued for these areas, resident’s cell phones and email addresses would be used to notify them, whenever and wherever they may be.

If residents haven’t signed up their cell phones for optional RoCo Alerts, they are encouraged to take a few minutes and sign up today through the RoCo Alert page on the county’s website at www.roanokecountyva.gov/rocoalert.

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