



Press Release

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The Washington Missing Persons Alert System: Something to be Thankful For!

OLYMPIA, Wash. – In the first 11 months of 2022, the Washington State Patrol (WSP) has coordinated a total of 77 missing person alerts utilizing the Washington Missing Persons Alert System, including:

- 5 Amber Alerts looking for missing children
- 47 Silver Alerts looking for missing seniors
- 8 Endangered Missing Persons Alerts looking for individuals with unique vulnerabilities
- 17 Missing Indigenous Person Alerts (MIPA) looking for missing indigenous persons

Law enforcement agencies across the nation have found the alerts help raise the public consciousness about dangers and vulnerabilities, thus enhancing public safety across all alert categories.

Of the 77 alerts year-to-date in Washington, there have been 70 successful recoveries. In at least 10 of those cases, law enforcement listed the alerts as essential to recovery. Of those remaining, five individuals are still missing and sadly, two individuals were found deceased leaving family and loved ones with tragic confirmation of their worst fears.

“During this time of family gatherings and Thanksgiving, it would be hard to imagine a more heartbreaking situation than to have a family member or a loved one missing,” said WSP Chief John Batiste. “These stories do not always have happy endings but often times, with your help, they do. So I urge everyone to pay attention to the alerts and to call 911 with any information that could be at all helpful in our searches. You never know what small observation can be the big break in a missing person’s case and YOU might just be a part of the best holiday possible for a hurting family.” The Chief added, “And that is something for which we can all be thankful.”

Always growing and adapting, 2022 saw two major enhancements of the Washington Missing Persons Alert System. Beginning in July, WSP and local law enforcement agencies implemented the Missing Indigenous Persons Alert (MIPA). MIPA has already been activated 17 times with 13 recoveries, three of

which directly resulted from a member of the public seeing the alert. (Three cases remain active and sadly, one case resulted in a confirmed fatality.)

Also in July, the system added the ability to geo-target the Wireless Emergency Alerts or WEA, which go directly to the public's cell phones. This allows for a more targeted search area and reduces the number of notices an individual may receive so as not to be overwhelming, unproductive, or irritating.

WSP's Missing and Unidentified Persons Unit (MUPU) can also embed a hyperlink in those messages that will take you directly to the MUPU Twitter page where you can view a poster with photos of the missing person, as well as the involved vehicle and suspect if one has been identified. You do not need a Twitter account to view the active poster.

"This technology has been a game changer for missing person alerts around the country and Washington is excited to introduce this new way of distributing important information to the public in a more targeted manner," said MUPU Director Carri Gordon. "We are fortunate in Washington that the general public, government agencies and local broadcasters have all really embraced the alert system. We get a lot of calls when alerts are posted and shared by the media and this new tool gives us that many more 'eyes and ears' in the field. Law enforcement cannot do this work alone. We are all in this together and updating technologies allows an engaged public additional tools that can significantly increase our chances for successful recoveries."

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remember MIPA is

**Missing
Indigenous
Person
Alert**