# 3.6 How to Conduct a Network Test

**Purpose**: This tool provides basic instructions for conducting a network test.

**Directions**: Follow the steps in the checklist below. A Sample Test Message follows the checklist.

* Alert network members that you will be conducting a test. Provide the date and time the test will take place. Explain what they will be asked to do.
* Request a backup contact if members anticipate being away during the time of the test.
* Alert other agencies about the upcoming test in case other tests or drills are occurring at the same time.
* Create a test message that is brief and explains the purpose of the test.
* For an e-mail test, indicate the message is a TEST in the subject line. Place e-mail addresses in the “Bcc” line to reduce the size of the message and ensure privacy.
* Give instructions for members’ response in bold font. For an e-mail test, instruct network members to hit the “reply” button, rather than “reply all.”
* Ask members to include the number of people they can reach during an emergency and within a particular timeframe (e.g., 24 hours), bearing in mind the message may need to be translated, reformatted, or adapted to be culturally relevant.
* Send the message through the channel(s) used to communicate with your network (e.g., e-mail, automated calling system, social media, text message).
* Contact members who don’t respond to determine where communication issues exist.
* Record results, such as the number of network members who responded, their outreach capacity, and the timeframe in which their replies were received (e.g., within 24 hours of initial receipt of the test message).

## Sample Test Message

|  |
| --- |
| From: |
| Subject: \*TEST\* Network Alert – Non-Emergency Test |
| Date: |
| To: |

Dear Network Member,

You are being contacted as part of the **[lead agency’s]** emergency notification message testing of the **[name of network]**. The purpose of this test is to estimate the effectiveness and efficiency of the network for communicating emergency messages to vulnerable populations.

**At this time, we are asking you to please respond by e-mail, telephone, or fax to confirm you have received this message. If you respond by e-mail, please hit the “reply” button. Do not hit “reply all.”**

**We also ask that you include in your response an estimate of the approximate number of citizens that you (or your organization) can reach with an emergency message and the time it would take to reach them. Please do not try to contact these individuals at this time.**

**Please keep in mind that during an emergency the message may need to be translated, reformatted, or adapted to be culturally relevant.**

If you are not a member of **[name of network]**, but are serving as a backup contact, please respond to the best of your ability. Information should be sent to **[name, phone number, fax number, e-mail address]**.

Thank you for your participation.

[Signature]

[Contact information]