

NEWS RELEASE

Alabama Department of Public Safety

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Department of Public Safety Joins in Commemorating

National AMBER Alert Awareness Day Jan. 13

States throughout the nation are joining together Jan. 13 to commemorate the 12th anniversary of the AMBER (America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response) Alert program and its mission of locating and safely recovering abducted and endangered children.

The AMBER Alert Plan had its beginnings in 1996 when 9-year-old Amber Hagerman was kidnapped and brutally murdered near her Arlington, Texas, home. The AMBER program evolved from a local network of radio broadcasters to include programs in all 50 states.

Alabama's AMBER Alert program became operational in May 2003, and 13 AMBER Alerts have been issued through the state's Emergency Alert System since that time. The program is conducted in partnership with the Alabama Broadcasters Association and participating law enforcement agencies. The Alabama Department of Transportation also participates, posting the alerts on roadside message boards.

"The AMBER program is an invaluable tool to aid in the safe recovery of the most vulnerable of victims," said Col. J. Christopher Murphy, Department of Public Safety director. "The success of this program in Alabama and nationwide attests to the value of getting identifying information out as quickly as possible to enlist the public's help in locating abducted children," said Murphy.

An enhancement to Alabama's AMBER program was implemented last October when e-mail notice of AMBER and Missing Child Alerts in Alabama became available to individual subscribers. Since that time, more than 800 people have signed up to receive the e-mail notifications. Persons who wish to receive the electronic notifications may do so by completing an on-line application form available on Public Safety's Web site, <http://dps.alabama.gov/>, under the Community Information Center link.

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