



# The Critical Role of Voice Evacuation and Mass Notification Systems in Modern Fire Safety

In today's complex building environments — from military bases and schools to healthcare facilities and industrial sites — life safety systems must do more than just sound an alarm. They need to clearly communicate, direct, and inform occupants during emergencies of all types, not just fires. That's where **voice evacuation systems** and **mass notification systems (MNS)** come into play, working alongside traditional fire alarm systems to provide comprehensive, real-time protection.

## Why Pair Voice Evacuation and Mass Notification with Fire Alarm Systems?

While fire alarms effectively alert occupants with strobes and horns, they often lack the ability to convey specific instructions or adapt to different emergency scenarios. A siren alone cannot differentiate between a fire, severe weather event, or security threat. Voice evacuation and mass notification systems fill this gap by delivering clear, intelligible messages — both pre-recorded and live — tailored to the situation.

This is not just an added feature; in many jurisdictions and building types, voice evacuation is a code-driven requirement. The **National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) 72: National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code** outlines where voice evacuation and mass notification systems are mandated or recommended to improve life safety outcomes.

## Capabilities of the Sigcom VECP-50 and MNS-100EXP

**Sigcom**, a respected name in life safety signaling, offers robust solutions for integrating voice messaging and mass notification into existing or new fire alarm systems. Two standout products in their lineup are the **VECP-50** and **MNS-100EXP**.

### Sigcom VECP-50: Voice Evacuation Control Panel

The **VECP-50** is a powerful but simple voice evacuation control panel designed to interface directly with virtually any fire alarm control panel (FACP). It adds both **pre-recorded digital voice messaging** and **live voice paging** capabilities to a building's life safety system. These control panels are an easy solution to add voice evacuation capability to a currently installed fire alarm control panel.

#### Key Features:

- 50 Watts of high-efficiency Class D audio power (expandable with additional amplifiers)
- 4 alert tones and 2 pre-recorded voice messages with field-selectable options
- Live voice paging via Integral supervised microphone or optional remote microphone
- Activated via fire alarm notification appliance circuits (NACs) or dry contact relays
- 4 field-selectable 25/70Vrms speaker loops
- Unlimited power handling capacity with optional DAPB-100 power boosters
- UL 864 listed for mass notification and fire alarm applications

The VECP-50 provides fast, reliable, and intelligible voice communication during an emergency, ensuring that building occupants receive clear instructions for evacuation, shelter-in-place, or relocation.

## **Sigcom MNS-100EXP: Mass Notification System**

The **MNS-100EXP** is a highly modular, expandable emergency communication system offering configurable command and communication capabilities for any emergency situation, including fire and weather emergencies, shelter in place, biological, chemical and nuclear emergencies and any other threat. A variety of input and output and control options are available to accommodate any small to large-scale mass notification requirements.

### **Key Features:**

- 100 Watts of efficient Class D amplification across four selectable speaker circuits (expandable up to 12 with the optional MNS-8-ZONE expander card)
- Supervised FACP NAC circuit primary input with 8 prioritized contact closure activation inputs
- Accommodates virtually any existing fire alarm control panel
- Up to 9 messages with 6 ½ minute capacity
- Supervised local and remote microphone inputs
- Unlimited power handling capacity with optional MNS-100APB power boosters
- ETL Listed for UL 864 and UL 1711 and complies with UL 2572

This makes the VECP50 an ideal solution for educational campuses, hospitals, government facilities, and industrial facilities where different areas may require tailored messaging during emergencies.

## **The Safety Impact**

Integrating voice evacuation and mass notification systems with fire alarms transforms a building's emergency response capability from a simple alerting tool into a dynamic life safety communication network. Studies have shown that clear, intelligible voice instructions can significantly improve evacuation times and occupant response during emergencies, reducing injuries and potentially saving lives.

By providing real-time, situation-specific guidance, these systems reduce confusion, prevent bottlenecks, and help people make safer decisions. Whether it's directing occupants to avoid a blocked exit during a fire or issuing shelter-in-place instructions during a severe weather event, the combination of fire alarms, voice evacuation, and mass notification offers comprehensive protection.

## **Final Thoughts**

When it comes to safeguarding lives in modern buildings, no single system is enough. Pairing your fire alarm system with a robust voice evacuation and mass notification solution like the **Sigcom VECP-50** ensures that your facility is equipped to communicate clearly and effectively during any emergency.

**Invest in safety. Invest in communication. Because in a crisis, clarity saves lives.**