

News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Mass Telephone Notification System Comes to Dakota County**

Imagine that a rail car carrying toxic chemicals has derailed in a residential area, a child has wandered away from her day care and is missing, or perhaps an armed suspect is hiding from police. How do police and fire agencies warn citizens about safety threats near their homes, or enlist their help?

Thanks to a new system in Dakota County, residents and businesses can receive timely, targeted information to help them stay safe. The Dakota Communications Center (DCC), which provides 9-1-1 answering and public safety dispatch county-wide, has partnered with all police and fire departments in Dakota County to provide the CodeRed emergency communication system, which delivers emergency messages to residents. The system combines computerized mapping software with a high speed telephone system to rapidly deliver targeted messages to areas as small as a city block or as large as an entire county.

While the system contains a large data base of residential and business telephone numbers, residents and businesses are encouraged to self-register their mobile phones, text devices and e-mail addresses.

“Emergency notification systems are only as good as the telephone database supporting them,” said Kent Therkelsen, the DCC executive director. “If your number is not in the database, you will not be called.” Because the system is programmed to call phones based on the address provided for each number, residents need to provide their address when they register.

Therkelsen especially encourages people who rely on mobile phones, have recently moved, have changed phone numbers or those who wish to receive notification by text or e-mail to self-register. Residents can choose more than one way to be notified. Information collected will only be used for emergency notification purposes.

To register or learn more, people may visit the DCC Web site at [www.mn-dcc.org](http://www.mn-dcc.org) and click on the “CodeRed” link. Those without internet service may contact the Dakota Communications Center at 651-322-8660, 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.