

# News Release

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September 15, 2014

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## **CodeRED® Emergency Alert System**

Wright County has a new rapid emergency notification service called CodeRED®. The new system will distribute emergency messages via telephone to targeted areas or the entire county at a rate of 1,000 calls per minute. CodeRED® employs a one-of-a-kind Internet mapping capability for geographic targeting of calls, coupled with a high speed telephone calling system capable of delivering customized emergency messages directly to homes and businesses.

This service can be used in case of fires, flooding, train derailment, chemical spills, nuclear incidents, evacuation, downed power lines, lost individuals, natural disasters, abductions, water system problems, bomb threats, disease outbreaks, or other emergencies. Calls can be geographically targeted for local incidents. If widespread, the entire county with 31,000 households can be called within 30 minutes.

Wright County residents are welcome and encouraged to enter their contact information for home, business, and mobile phones so they may be contacted by the system in the event of an emergency. Most landlines are automatically part of the system but mobile phones are not. It is important for county residents and business customers to register, especially if they use unlisted numbers, cell phones, or VoIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol). Those who do not register their address and phone number may not be notified with CodeRED® in case of an emergency.

Registration is confidential, free, and easy. To register, go to the Wright County website at [www.co.wright.mn.us](http://www.co.wright.mn.us) and click on the CodeRED® Emergency Notification link on the lower left side of the page.

Two in every five American homes (41%) have only wireless telephones according to the National Center for Health Statistics (July 2014). In addition, among households with both landline and wireless telephones, 33.6% received all or almost all calls on wireless telephones. Even if you do have a landline, by registering your wireless phone you can receive emergency messages while away from home.

**Funding for CodeRED® is provided by the Wright County Sheriff's Office, the Public Health Emergency Preparedness program and the Nuclear Office.**

**Here are the most common questions about CodeRED®:**

- **I received a CodeRED® call; does that mean I am in the CodeRED® database?**

Yes. Landlines are automatically included in the database. If you would like to submit a cell phone number, text and email information, you must visit the Wright County website and click on the CodeRED® Notification. CodeRED® always de-duplicates by phone number, so if you are unsure if you are registered, just submit your information again. This will ensure your phone number is in the database!

- **Why did CodeRED® call me several times?**

If there is no answer and you do not have an answering device, the number will be attempted up to three times.

- **It called me but no message played.**

If you answer and do not say hello, CodeRED® will not begin playing automatically. It is trying to determine if it has reached a live person or answering device. If you don't say anything, it will hang up and retry the number in the next pass of the non-connected numbers.

- **Why did it leave only part of the message on my answering machine?**

CodeRED® will leave a message on an answering device. There are many different brands and types of devices for leaving a message. Occasionally something about the answering device or the beep of the device causes the system to think it has reached a live person and begins playing the message. When the message is left, it only leaves part of the message. You can call back at 866-419-5000 to hear the entire message. This doesn't happen often but there is a chance that you may get a few of these.

- **Why does my phone ring once and hang up? It has called me twice and won't let me answer it.**

If you have a ring back tone, which plays a song instead of ringing, the system will interpret this

as an “Operator Intercept” and hang up, only to retry the number. You have two options. You can remove the ring back tone **or** you can contact your cell phone provider and request that the phone number for the general database 855-969-4636 and for the emergency database 866-419-5000 bypass this feature and have it ring normally.

Citizens may also sign up for notifications from individual county departments by clicking on the “Notify Me” button near the top of the Wright County homepage. This past summer many people received timely notices when flooding caused road closures. You can sign up for alerts from the Sheriff’s Office and Emergency Management, the Highway Department, Public Health, and many other county departments.

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