
Press Release

NEWS

*Burlington County
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wednesday, April 28, 2010

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FREEHOLDERS APPROVE EMERGENCY ALERTING SYSTEM

Municipalities Offered Free Technology to Notify Residents

The Freeholders today approved a county-wide web-based emergency notification system that will be available to the County Office of Emergency Management as well as all 40 municipalities.

Global Connect, an emergency notification/reverse 9-1-1 provider in Mays Landing, will provide the VOIP (Voice Over the Internet Protocol) system for an annual maintenance fee of \$92,500. The County OEM will utilize Homeland Security funds to pay that cost. There is no software, hardware, set-up, recording, training, service or minimum usage fees.

"History has proved, even in Burlington County, that communication is a key element in protecting lives and property," Freeholder Mary Ann O'Brien said. "This is an important tool for our first responders to be able to alert our residents of emergency situations and to instruct them how they can help themselves until aid arrives."

System capabilities include notifying all residents or just those in specific areas of the County of emergency conditions with direct, timely instructions and preventative measures.

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All hard-line home and business phone numbers will be provided by Verizon. Additional means of receiving messages by cell phone or text message, email or PDA will need to be voluntarily provided by residents.

Notification can be deployed from any location at any time using the phone, internet or PDA (personal digital assistant) by any authorized administrator.

The system gives administrators the capability of notifying specific first responders, including police, fire, EMS (Emergency Medical Service), OEM (Office of Emergency Management), CBRNE (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive), CERT (Community Emergency Response Team), MRC (Medical Reserve Corps) and CART (County Animal Response Team).

The system also offers several call-back features and reporting modules to verify that the message has reached the target audience.

Another feature will be the ability to communicate with the hearing impaired through text messaging, email or TTY (Telecommunication Text for the deaf). A special needs directory will be established.

Atlantic County currently utilizes the same notification system and the two counties have agreed for their systems to serve as a backup to each other's system. In addition, both counties will have access to each other's information. Burlington County residents near the border with Atlantic County can be notified of an emergency in that county that may impact them.

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