



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 14th, 2011

WASHINGTON COUNTY TO BEGIN WENS ALERT NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

WASHINGTON COUNTY, IOWA – Washington County will begin using an emergency notification system that may alert you by landline phone, cellular phone voice or text message and /or as an e-mail to your e-mail address. WENS alerts are messages that may alert you of an emergency situation, may ask you to take appropriate action, or both. The National Weather Service will automatically send severe weather warnings to affected areas of the county and Emergency Services (911) will be able to send other emergency messages as well. Text messages will be short (only 160 characters long). This is a free notification service but your cellular phone provider will charge you for receiving alerts via your cellular phone. Alerts will only be done in the event of emergency situations. Landline phones will automatically be entered in the system but any cellular phones or email addresses must be registered by the citizens wishing to receive the service. Register today at: http://entry.inspironlogistics.com/washington_ia/wens.cfm.

Frequently Asked Questions:

Why should I register?

While Washington County uses a number of emergency notification methods to notify you of an emergency, using the WENS system could save you critical time depending upon your location.

Is there a charge for registering to receive message through WENS?

This is a free service provided by Washington County and sponsored by Washington County Public Health. However, your cellular phone provider may charge you for receiving text or phone messages. If you are concerned about being charged for an alert check your service agreement from your wireless carrier for details. Service costs from your cellular provider are your responsibility.

Why are you sending text messages?

Attempting to call everyone could take hours. This is an important factor, especially during a time sensitive emergency. WENS alerts will be short and meant to make registrants aware that there is an emergency and direct them to take appropriate action.

Under what circumstances will I receive WENS alerts?

WENS alerts are used during emergencies that threaten life safety and /or may severely impact the citizens of Washington County. These alerts may include severe weather alerts, Homeland Security alerts, boil orders, evacuation alerts and other alerts that could affect you and your family.

Will the WENS system work if there is a power failure?

All systems, including e-mail and text message systems are subject to failures due to emergencies and disasters. While WENS is a valuable addition to our existing emergency notification systems, we cannot guarantee that it will work in all emergencies. This is why we try to have redundant systems of emergency communication notification including outdoor warning sirens, NOAA weather radio alerts, and emergency service announcements via the local media sources.

I do not want to receive WENS messages anymore. How do I unsubscribe?

At any time, you can simply return to the WENS website and click the unsubscribe button to stop receiving messages. Enter the contact information that you used to register and then select the unsubscribe box at the bottom of the page.

How do I update my information if my e-mail address, cellular phone number or other information has changed?

If your contact information has changed, follow the instructions above to unsubscribe the information that has changed. You must then register again with your new contact information.

Can I register my parents or other family members to receive alerts?

Yes. You may register as one voice phone number with multiple cellular numbers for text alerts and e-mails or you can individually register so that all of your phone numbers receive a voice message and a text message.

Will I receive advertising or SPAM on my phone?

No. Inspiron Logistics, the company behind the Wireless Emergency Notification System (WENS), does not tolerate spam text or email messages. Washington County will only utilize the alerts in the event of an emergency.

How do I acquire additional information about WENS or report a problem with the system?

For more information contact: Dana Fleck at 1-866-998-9367 with Inspiron Logistics 2251 Front Street, Suite 105 Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44221. If you do not have internet access this is the number you will need to register at.

How do I register?

Register by clicking the WENS link at: http://entry.inspironlogistics.com/washington_ia/wens.cfm. Enter your phone number (landline, mobile/cellular, VOIP), e-mail address and/or text/SMS number. You will receive a confirmation that you have opted into the alert system to receive notifications. Your registration information is private and will not be shared. You may enter more than one number indicating if "text" or "voice" is desired.