

# FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH

## COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

### (CNS)

The Fairbanks North Star Borough's emergency preparedness and response efforts now include a computerized, telephone-based Community Emergency Notification System (CNS) provided to the Borough by Intrado Inc. This new public safety tool gives all Police and Fire Departments the ability to send a recorded message about potential dangers or public safety issues to a specific area of the Borough, or to the entire area, if needed.

CNS can make hundreds of telephone calls per minute to notify residents of an impending emergency and how to respond. CNS operates from the state's 9-1-1 database, which lists even unlisted phone numbers. However, cellular phones and Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) numbers are not included in the 9-1-1 database. Those residents who do not have a landline and rely on cellular or VOIP may be able to register their phone numbers in the future. Call (907) 459-1481 for more information.

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### **What is the CNS?**

CNS is the Community Notification System. The system is designed to rapidly notify an affected area of an emergency by sending a recorded message through the telephone system.

#### **How does the CNS work?**

When a public safety agency determines there is an immediate need to inform the public about an event, it must specify the area to receive the notification. A polygon is drawn around the warning area on a computer map and the CNS uses the 911 database to extract phone numbers within that area. The CNS then launches a prerecorded message to those telephone numbers in that specified area.

#### **Will the CNS work with cell phones?**

Cell phones are not part of the 911 database. Currently, system developers are working to include the ability to send the message on cell phones using text messaging technology.

#### **How will CNS calls appear on Caller ID?**

Several telephone carriers are used to send the message so the caller ID may vary. Primarily it will show *Priority Alert* or *Alert Call*.

#### **How does the system work with answering machines or voice mail?**

The system is designed to leave a message on voice mail or an answering machine.

**How does the CNS handle TTY?**

The system also has TTY capability for the hearing impaired. There is TTY detection equipment that will bypass the voice-recorded portion when a TTY or TDD is detected. All agencies will use the TTY portion of the system.

**What if the phone is busy when the system calls?**

The system is designed to call back if the line is busy or if there is no answer. The system will wait three minutes before a second callback is made. If the line is still busy or is not answered, the system will wait an additional three minutes before attempting a final call.

**What happens if a resident moves or a new phone is installed?**

Intrado is the custodian of the 911 database and is required to keep the 911 database current when a service order is received for a new phone or if a phone is moved to a different location. This applies to all telephone providers that offer local service. All local telephone providers are required to put the changes and additions into the 911 database.

**What will the CNS call tell me?**

Each notification call will be different. The primary agency handling the emergency will make the recording you will hear. It is important to follow the instructions on the recording.

**Should I call 911 if I need more information?**

No, 911 should only be called when you have an emergency. The emergency notification recording will give you instructions to follow.

**Who will use CNS?**

The CNS Program is available to all law enforcement and fire agencies in the Fairbanks North Star Borough.