



# MEDIA RELEASE

## Emergency Management

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## Lake County Emergency Alerts



**Jan. 14, 2019 @ 10:00 AM:**

Coming Soon! Around the first of February, Lake County will begin a campaign encouraging the public to sign up for our “Lake County Emergency Alerts” mass notification system.

“But, don’t we already have a system like that?” you may ask. “I thought I signed up for one a while ago.”

It’s true that Lake County will be switching from our old system (CodeRED) to a new one - “Lake County Emergency Alerts” powered by Everbridge. But why the switch?

Each year we evaluate warning systems as they improve with technology changes. Several years ago, for example, we discontinued the outdoor sirens and went to an internet-based system that reaches out to landline phones, cell phones, texts, and emails.

“This year,” said BJ Kohlstedt, Lake County Emergency Manager, “the Everbridge system offers several advantages over our previous system that make it worth the switch.”

“First, it’s easier and quicker for our Sheriff’s dispatchers to send alerts when time is of the essence. Second, Lake County will own the data submitted by the public, so alerts will come to you from a local phone number and email address (rather than an unidentified out of state number). Third, it allows us the capability to send messages through the federal IPAWS (Integrated Public Alert and Warning System) that goes out to radio and TV stations, and all cell phones in a selected area. We can also copy messages directly to our County website and Facebook page. All this comes at a taxpayer cost of less than the previous system.”

What kind of messages might you expect? Evacuations may be the most imperative. Lake County has 36 pre-planned evacuation zones for wildfire or other causes. Shelter-in-place warnings might be sent due to dangerous fumes from hazardous materials spills. Boil orders, road closures, etc. are other examples.

“Local government’s highest priority is to provide for citizen safety, and we want to use as many tools as we can to do that,” said Kohlstedt. “We think this is a good one.”

Stay tuned for more information.

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