

OTSEGO COUNTY ANNOUNCES NEW  
EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

The Otsego County Office of Emergency Services has partnered with Hyper-Reach Emergency Notification Systems to provide Mass Emergency Notifications to the residents and visitors of Otsego County. Hyper-Reach allows Emergency Services Staff to quickly send a message to residents in a specific area informing them of an emergency situation that may require action on their part. The system is designed to send thousands of calls or messages simultaneously and has been successfully used on countless occasions across the U.S. for emergency incidents such as hazardous chemical releases, missing persons, barricaded persons, storm warnings, boil water alerts and much more. The message informs residents of what is occurring, what steps they need to take and other emergency related information.

All hardwired telephones in Otsego County are automatically listed in a confidential database to receive these alerts, however, if residents want to receive warnings/messages that pertain to their local area, home or property while they are away from their residence, they will need to sign up additional points of contact such as cell phones and email at the following web site. This only takes a few minutes and this information is also kept confidential:

Community Sign Up Web Site:

<https://secure.hyper-reach.com/comsignupw.jsp?id=40002>

Even though we have this new emergency phone notification system, we still want to remind everyone that no single tool will provide enough warning to all people in all situations. While this new system gives us greater capabilities, it is only one component of the overall public safety communications strategy. We remind everyone to always seek out information from as many reliable sources as possible to be prepared for disasters that can affect our county.

We offer the following reminders of things you can do keep you and your families prepared for emergencies:

### *Emergency Preparedness Tips*

- Maintain a supply of items for your home, office and car including: flashlights, batteries, AM/FM battery powered radio, rechargeable power failure lights, wind up or battery alarm clock, and lightsticks.
- Have a 72-hour emergency kit for each family member.
- Keep cash and change on hand. In power failures ATMs may not work and you may need to make a phone call at a pay phone.
- Phones with answering machines and cordless phones are power dependent. Have at least one phone that does not require power in case you need to call 9-1-1. Keep your cell phone charged.
- If you use candles for lighting, place them on a fire proof surface.
- Make sure you have smoke detectors in appropriate rooms. Change the batteries regularly, preferably every 6 months, and test them monthly. If your smoke detectors are wired directly into the electrical system of your home they will not operate during a power failure unless the batteries are working.
- Have a fire extinguisher and know how to operate it. Have a fire evacuation plan and practice fire drills.
- During the power outage, unplug all small appliances and electronics to avoid damage from power surge. Leave one low wattage incandescent light on so you know when the power comes back on.
- NEVER run a generator indoors or in partly enclosed areas such as a garages. ONLY use outdoors and far from windows, doors, vents, crawl spaces and in an area where adequate ventilation is available and will not accumulate deadly exhaust gas.

Additional preparedness information can be found on the Office of Emergency Services Web Site: <http://www.otsegocounty.com/depts/ems/StormPrepardness1.htm>