

REVERSE 911

INTERACTIVE COMMUNITY NOTIFICATION

Gem County's Reverse 911 Interactive Community Notification System allows Gem County and Emmett City public safety officials to send a recorded message via telephone to thousands of homes in the event of an emergency or significant event. Gem County's REVERSE 911 (R911) system is a computer-based program that can send emergency messages using a combination of database and Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping technologies. The system can quickly target a precise geographic area and saturate it with thousands of calls. Reverse 911 offers a variety of options that allow the Police, Fire, and Health Departments to custom-build a notification system to meet the exact needs of the community.

Reverse 911 can be used for many situations to include:

- Emergency Evacuations
- Missing Person Alerts
- Natural Disaster Alerts
- Hazardous Material Leaks
- Crime Alerts and Prevention Information
- Neighborhood Emergency Situations
- Homeland Security Alerts
- Road closures
- School closings

How Reverse 911 Works

In the event of an emergency, Gem County Emergency Services can identify the affected areas of Gem County and record a message that describes the situation and recommends the protective measures that should be taken. The Reverse 911 system will automatically call out to all telephone numbers within that geographical area and deliver the recorded message. If the phone lines are busy, the system will attempt to redial those numbers a pre determined number of times to make contact. If an answering machine picks up the call, the emergency message will be left on the machine.

The Reverse 911 system contacts individuals with published and unpublished numbers.

System Features

The Reverse 911 system's features make it an excellent tool for sharing information and alerting residents in the case of an emergency situation.

- It can provide an initial warning as well as specific instructions to protect at-risk citizens. Both factors are necessary for an effective warning.
- Reverse 911 can target specific geographic locations, warning only those people who are directly at risk.
- The system uses existing devices (telephones) to alert citizens; there is no need for people to buy a specialized warning device.
- The system can deliver text messages to TTY/TDD devices. This feature has the potential to greatly enhance our ability to warn and protect citizens who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- System administrators can add telephone numbers to the database. This can be used to add cell phone numbers to the system

System Limitations

As with any system, the Reverse 911 system has its limitations. These can be minimized with diligent administration of the system, but they will always exist to some degree:

- Cell phone numbers are not included in the database. Cell phone numbers can be manually entered into the system in order to be linked to a specific address but only one phone number can be linked to any given address. If a cell phone is linked to a specific address, the location of the cell phone number becomes essentially fixed to that location. This could lead to the situation of a cell phone being notified when the user is mobile and well out of the affected area. Or conversely, the situation where the user is mobile, is in the affected area, but is not notified because the fixed location of the number is in an unaffected area. Please consider this when registering cell phone information for addition to the database.
- Reverse 911 is very effective for making notifications within a well-defined geographic area. Due to the outgoing call capacity of the system, the system becomes less effective as the geographic area gets larger. For this reason, Gem County takes a systematic approach to warning, recognizing that no single application can provide warning to all citizens in all situations. The Reverse 911 system is an excellent enhancement to the County's system of sharing information with our citizens, but it does not replace Gem County's other notification systems.

Call Screening Features

Reverse 911 will not work with phone lines having call screening features. For example, if your phone line requires an individual to identify himself or herself through a recorded message before the call is accepted, the Reverse 911 system may not work. The system is designed to play the recorded message upon voice activation, such as a person saying "hello" or an answering machine recording.

Private Call Blocking

Moreover, the Reverse 911 system will work if your phone line has private call blocking. The system automatically identifies itself, allowing the phone call through.

The incorporation of the REVERSE 911 system represents the Gem County's continuing commitment to providing our citizens with the most advanced technologies available to ensure that our local public safety is as effective as possible.

CAUTION: WHILE THE COUNTY'S MASS NOTIFICATION SYSTEM IS CONSIDERED EFFECTIVE AND EFFICIENT, YOU SHOULD NOT WAIT FOR OR RELY EXCLUSIVELY ON A MASS NOTIFICATION SYSTEM CALL FOR EVACUATION DIRECTIVES IF YOU THINK YOU ARE IN DANGER. IF YOU THINK YOU ARE IN DANGER, YOU SHOULD EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY. IF YOU ARE DIRECTED TO EVACUATE BY EMERGENCY PERSONNEL, YOU SHOULD FOLLOW THEIR DIRECTION.

Gem County Reverse 911

Request for change, addition or deletion to database

Check One:

Add to Database_____

Change to Database_____

****Remove from Database**_____

*****I have read the above uses for notification by Reverse 911 and understand that by requesting to be removed from the database, even in the event of an emergency I will not be notified by the Reverse 911 system of that information.***

Name_____ **Date**_____

First Name*: _____

Last Name (or Name of Business)*: _____

Numeric and Street Name*: _____

City* _____

Zip Code*: _____

Landline Phone Number to be Added : _____

OR

Landline Number to be changed from: _____ to:

OR

Change from Landline phone number: _____ to:

Cell Phone Number: _____

OR

**Phone number to be removed from database: _____

***Before completing be sure to read and sign Remove From Database Disclaimer above*

Check if any of the above phone numbers are TDD/TTY numbers: ____

*Denotes a required field

Comments: _____

I certify that I am authorized to request additions/changes to the status of this telephone number in the Gem County Reverse 911 Database:

Name

Date

Return this form to:

Lisa Resinkin, Gem County Dispatch Center, 415 E. Main St., Emmett, ID 83617

