



## **REVERSE 911®**

### **FACT SHEET**

#### **What is REVERSE 911®?**

REVERSE 911® is a communications tool that uses a patented combination of database and GIS mapping technologies to deliver emergency notifications to the community via phone numbers included in the system.

Using REVERSE 911®, city officials can quickly target a precise geographic area of the city or the city as a whole and potentially reach thousands of phone numbers each hour. For example, a targeted neighborhood may be canvassed by REVERSE 911® in less than an hour.

**Test calls to Snoqualmie residents and businesses will be made during the week of October 22, 2012. This is an annual test of a system already in operation.**

#### **What should I do if I don't receive a test call?**

Residents or businesses that do not receive a call during the week of October 17 should add their phone number to the REVERSE 911® database system in one of two ways:

- On the City of Snoqualmie website ([www.cityofsnoqualmie.org](http://www.cityofsnoqualmie.org)), click "REVERSE 911® Sign Up and Information" to fill out a confidential online form.
- Those without internet access may sign up by calling the City of Snoqualmie Emergency Operations Center at 425-888-5911. Callers should leave contact information including name, phone number, and property address.

#### **What if I have more than one phone number and want all of them to be called for the test and for future emergencies?**

You may have multiple phone numbers included in the REVERSE 911® database. For example, you may want to have your home phone, your cell phone, and another family member's cell phone included so that you receive the emergency notification anywhere you are. Please use the instructions provided above to register one or more phone numbers in the REVERSE 911® system.

#### **When the REVERSE 911® system calls me, how will I know that the REVERSE 911® call is not a telemarketer?**

The recorded message will start with, "This is the Snoqualmie Emergency Management Department with an important message."

### **What if I don't answer the phone or am not home?**

The REVERSE 911® system will recognize when a voicemail system has answered. Although it will begin the message immediately, it will repeat the message again to be sure that the message has also been recorded on your answering machine (assuming that your voicemail greeting is 30 seconds or less).

### **What if I do not have a regular landline phone?**

REVERSE 911® will attempt to call any number you provide to be associated with your property address including phone numbers that are not landlines, such as cell phone numbers or VoIP (such as Vonage or Comcast) service numbers. You may add as many additional phone numbers as you want. You simply have to associate each with your property address.

Using the instructions given toward the top of this document, you may enter additional phone numbers via the City of Snoqualmie website or by calling 425-888-5911.

### **Why do we need REVERSE 911®?**

The City of Snoqualmie is prone to natural disasters such as floods and windstorms. Quick and reliable dissemination of information is crucial to the successful mitigation of incidents and the safety of citizens. This need was evident during the floods of November 2008 and January 2009, as well as the December 2008 winter storm. Timely and reliable information needed to be delivered to the community as quickly as possible. The communication could not wait for mail delivery. Our only resource was for city staff and volunteers to go door-to-door with flyers until all residents could be reached.

### **What will REVERSE 911® be used for?**

The community notification system will be used to transmit emergency information as deemed necessary by city officials. Examples of reasons for notification are:

- Disaster Recovery Instructions
- Boil Water Notices
- Evacuations
- Emergency Shelter
- Requests for Community Assistance
- Major Road Closures
- Hazardous Material Spills

### **Is the REVERSE 911® system that is used in Snoqualmie the same as the system used in other King County cities, such as Bellevue?**

Yes and no. Each city owns and operates its own version of a REVERSE 911® system. There are many different types and brands of GIS and internet-based notification systems available. We use the same brand of REVERSE 911® software as Bellevue and many other cities.

The main difference is that we own and manage the database; it is exclusive to Snoqualmie. The phone numbers in the Snoqualmie database were initially provided by King County 911 dispatch. We keep our database current by cross reference with the City of Snoqualmie utility billing software and Snoqualmie's annual REVERSE 911® tests.

All phone numbers are confidential and will be used in case of regional emergency only by the City of Snoqualmie Emergency Management Department or by the King County 911 emergency dispatch.

**What if the phone lines in my neighborhood are down and REVERSE 911® cannot call me?**

This is a limitation of the REVERSE 911® system. The City of Snoqualmie owns and operates an AM radio broadcast system jointly with the City of North Bend. The station, heard locally at 1650 AM, can serve as a back-up communications channel for the REVERSE 911 system. It is important that your disaster preparedness kit include a battery-operated radio as another means to receive important and updated emergency information.

**Will I be guaranteed to receive a call when a disaster occurs?**

No. Many situations affect the delivery of a phone message. Examples include: phone lines down, power outage, hang up believing it is a telemarketer, changing a phone number without notifying the City Emergency Management Department, not answering a call-waiting beep, not checking voicemail, overloaded phone circuits, or any other possible scenario outside the city's control.

**Who should I call if I have more questions about REVERSE 911®?**

Please contact the City of Snoqualmie Emergency Operation Center (Fire Department) during regular business hours at 425-888-1551. In the event of a disaster, this phone line is open after hours on an as-needed basis.

**Other Emergency Information**

**How do I get more information about disaster preparedness for my home and family?**

Valuable information about disaster preparedness is posted in the Emergency Management Department section of the city website at [www.cityofsnoqualmie.org](http://www.cityofsnoqualmie.org).

**Is there training or volunteer opportunities for helping our community during times of disaster?**

Yes. When disaster hits, our resources often become overwhelmed and all emergent issues must be prioritized. It may take awhile before first responders can reach everyone that needs assistance. Therefore, the City of Snoqualmie offers Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training to teach interested individuals how to take care of their own immediate needs and those of their neighbors. There is also an amateur radio operators group and training to help at an emergency shelter if people are evacuated from their homes.

For more information about emergency volunteer and training opportunities, please visit the Emergency Management Department section of the city website or call 425-888-5911.