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## **Cell Phone Users Can Register for Emergency Notifications**

**PHOENIX (August 23, 2010)** — When emergencies happen in your neighborhood, public safety agencies can use the 9-1-1 database to call your home to let you know the nature of the emergency and what to do. But what happens if you don't have a home telephone and only have cell phone service? Now, thanks to a regional investment in a new software system, you can register your cell phone or voice-over IP (VoIP) systems to receive such emergency notifications.

The Community Emergency Notification System (CENS), also known as Reverse 9-1-1, is a rapid emergency notification system that was launched in the Maricopa Region in January 2004. The system contacts the public by telephone during times of emergency informing them in English, Spanish and TTY of the nature of the emergency and what steps they need to take to address the emergency. CENS has been used for both law enforcement and fire related emergencies. Any emergency agency in the Maricopa Region has access to CENS, but it can only be activated for defined emergency incidents. Potential uses could include emergencies such as major fires, public safety threats, flash floods, hazardous materials spills, police incidents, and endangered children or elderly persons.

Historically, the system has been limited to the ability to only notify wireline (hardwired) phones listed in the 9-1-1 database. A self-registration webpage is now available for residents to register their cell or voice over IP phones (VoIP) for CENS with an address they provide.

"Typically, this address would be your home address," says City of Phoenix 9-1-1 Administrator Liz Graeber. "The address you provide would be linked to your cell phone number, and any Reverse 9-1-1 call made to your neighborhood would automatically be routed to your cell phone, regardless of where you are at the time," she said. "This means that people without traditional 'land lines' can now receive the same emergency notifications as their neighbors. This is a key addition to the notification tools used by law enforcement agencies and fire departments in the Valley."

Graeber said the Maricopa Association of Governments 9-1-1 Oversight Committee decided to invest in the self-registration software because many people are getting rid of their home telephone service and using only mobile phones or VoIP systems. Residents may register up to three devices per email address; if you have more than three devices, you will need to register with alternate email accounts. You could also register to receive notifications near your work or business, as long as you use a separate email account. Registering a cell phone or VoIP phone with a street address will allow the registered device to be included in CENS message sent in the prescribed area.

Residents wishing to self-register their cell phones or VoIP phones in the CENS program must do so through the self registration link on the website at: [www.maricoparegion911.org/CENS.htm](http://www.maricoparegion911.org/CENS.htm). Registrations completed by 5:00 p.m. will be added to the CENS system overnight.

For questions about the system, please refer to the FAQ page on the website or contact Liz Graeber at (602) 534-9775.

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