

Emergency notification available to all fixed and cell phone numbers in county—residents must simply register numbers.

By Jan Rahn

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Perkins County residents are urged to take advantage of a weather alert system that takes the place of formerly used Safety Alert Monitor (SAM).

A newer system, CodeRED, which alerts residents of severe weather has been in place for the past four years. However, now there is more of an urgency to sign up—because the SAM system is now obsolete due to upgrades to area cable equipment, according to Perkins County Emergency Manager Jim Brueggeman.

In light of the recent severe weather threats, Brueggeman encourages Perkins County residents to get signed up for CodeRED, which is an emergency alert system through land line telephones and cell phones. There is no charge for this service.

When residents had SAM units (small weather scanners) information was issued by the National Weather Service and broadcast locally by the Perkins County Emergency Management Agency.

With the CodeRED system in place, county officials have the ability to deliver pre-recorded emergency messages at a rate of up to 60,000 per hour through the phone. The system can also alert residents of other emergency situations.

Residents must first sign up for the CodeRED system through a simple process. See instructions below.

Outside of signing up for CodeRED warnings, Brueggeman urges residents to take a proactive stance when it comes to severe weather.

He advises residents to get a weather scanner, stay tuned to their local radio and TV stations during bad weather, and to have a preparedness plan in place to take immediate action if needed.

Brueggeman also suggests putting together a survival kit to be used in an emergency.

To prepare for power outages and the disruption of essential services, residents can get information on preparing an emergency supply kit for their homes and cars by visiting <http://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>. When preparing a kit, remember medications, in addition to food and water needed for the well being of pets.

CodeRED Signup

Sign up online for this free service or call the sheriff's office at 308-352-4564 for assistance.

To sign up online:

- Visit the Perkins County Sheriff's Office website at www.perkinscoso.com
- Click on the CodeRED link on the lefthand side of the page.
- This link will direct users to the CodeRED sign-up form which can simply be filled out and submitted through the website.

No one should automatically assume his or her phone number is included in the system. However, if a resident signed up initially and has been receiving alerts, they will continue to be in the system.

All businesses should register, as well as all individuals who have unlisted phone numbers, who have changed their phone number or address and who use a cellular phone as their primary home phone.

What Is CodeRED?

The CodeRED system is a notification system based geographically—this means street addresses are needed in order to select which phone numbers will receive notification calls in any given situation, such as severe weather warning by the National Weather Service, or an evacuation notice as the result of a hazardous material spill.

The system works fine for cell phones, but there needs to be a street address in the database. People who have moved but kept the same listed or unlisted phone number will need to change their address in the database.

The information entered into the CodeRED system will only be used for emergency notification purposes.