



FRIENDS OF ORACLE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Firewise News

News from your local Fire Department and the community . . .



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SPRING 2007

Oracle Fire Dept. Installs Emergency Auto-Dialer System



At a public meeting held on February 5th this year, the Governing Board of the Oracle Fire Department, agreed to purchase the necessary equipment for an **automatic dialer system**.

Just the thought of an evacuation, can be quite unnerving for citizens who reside within fire prone areas. A fast moving fire can trigger an evacuation with little warning time. Fires have become a way of life in Oracle, and the fire department has long recognized the need for an effective, early warning system. Several ideas have been explored, including a public siren warning system and a telephone tree.

Friends of Oracle Fire Department began developing a telephone tree system. It was quickly discovered that the major disadvantage of a manually operated phone tree system, was in assembling and managing a large workforce of telephone operators.

The main advantage of using an **auto dialer**, is that just **one person can automatically contact hundreds of residents per hour, and give each the exact same message**. Message content and routing of messages to the affected areas, can be changed as often as conditions require.

The new equipment has been installed, and volunteers are beginning to load the database. Oracle currently has 1200 phone numbers listed in the local directory, including many people who have also requested to be contacted on their work or cell phones. The committee is hoping to have the approximate 2000 phone number database, sorted by geographical areas and loaded into the automatic dialer soon.

A typical ten second, emergency telephone message, may state something like: "a wildfire located in the area of XYZ Street, may warrant an evacuation of your neighborhood" -or- "a wildfire has forced an evacuation of your area and the following roads have been closed ...

The system will never be used for anything other than emergency situations affecting a large number of people. The database is *confidential* and is kept locked inside of the auto dialer workstation.

WHAT IS AN AUTO-DIALER?

Have you ever heard of Reverse 911?

Our Auto-Dialer System is similar to Reverse 911 systems in that they are communication solutions that use a combination of database and GIS mapping technologies to deliver outbound notifications.

Users can quickly target a precise geographic area and saturate it with thousands of calls per hour. The system's interactive technology provides immediate interaction with recipients and aids in rapid response to specific needs.

Users can create a list of individuals with common characteristics (such as a Neighborhood Crime Watch group or emergency responder teams) and contact them with helpful information as needed.

"Receiving an early notification from the auto dialer system, does not take the place of doing advance preparation for an evacuation!"

– Larry Southard,
Public Information Officer, OFD



The Oracle Kid's Safety House takes off for another community visit to help spread the word on fire safety.

What's New(s)?

The **Brush Dump** (open 7a-5p every day) is still active and waiting for your grass and brush! Don't wait til the heat hits and it's a hassle. Oracle keeps looking better and better – let's keep it up (or, rather, keep it out)! We still have a lot of work to do.

Seventeen Oracle citizens have recently graduated from a Community Emergency Response Team (**CERT**) program. Those who have completed the 20-hour class, will become deployable through the fire dept. During emergencies, CERTs will be assigned specific tasks, such as helping with evacuations, staffing the fire station and guiding incoming resources to their staging areas. CERT is a nationally recognized emergency response group and part of the Citizens Corps. CERT members can easily be identified by their green helmets, green safety vests and photo ID badges.

Are you ready for a **Firewise Property Evaluation** either before or after your hard work begins on your yard? We are here to help you work in the smartest manner to clear your home of potential hazards. Call us to arrange for a free evaluation by qualified fire staff.



FRIENDS of Oracle Fire Dept.

1475 American Ave.
Oracle, AZ 85623



CERTs in training

Watch for our upcoming event this Fall . . .

THE ORACLE FIRE DEPT. FIRST ANNUAL CHILE COOKOFF!

SUNDAY • OCTOBER 21, 2007
ORACLE COMMUNITY CENTER

Friends of OFD is a group of volunteers that support the Fire Dept. by assisting in non-firefighting services. If you are interested in volunteering with Friends, contact Larry Southard at 896-2980.

GETTING ON THE AUTO-DIALER WITH YOUR OTHER NUMBERS:

If you want your *work number*, and/or *cell phone number* programmed in the **Auto Dialer system**, you will need to provide a *written* request to the Oracle Fire Department. It can be dropped off at the fire station or sent to POB 977, Oracle, AZ 85623 . You can email them at: oraclefd@qwest.net or fax to: 896-2749. Fire department personnel will not accept verbal requests. *If you wish, fill in this request and send or drop off to the Oracle Fire Dept:*

Yes, I wish this information to be given to the Oracle Fire Dept. for use in the Auto Dialer System in case of emergency. I understand that this information is kept strictly confidential.

Name: (*please print*) _____

Address: (mailing) _____ Physical Adr: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Tel: (home) _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____