



2021 Division Road North
Kingsville, Ontario N9Y 2Y9
(519) 733-2305
www.kingsville.ca
kingsvilleworks@kingsville.ca

Date: June 1, 2017
To: Mayor and Council
Author: Chuck Parsons – Fire Chief
RE: Kingsville Alerts Mass Notification launch
Report No.: FD-2017-004

AIM

To provide council with information about the implementation of the Kingsville Alerts mass notification system.

BACKGROUND

The County of Essex has provided the lower tier municipalities' access to a Citizen Mass Notification System for several years known by the trade name of "Reverse 911". Support for this software ceased and the infrastructure has been removed. This has left a gap in our municipality's ability to efficiently notify residents with important information during an emergency.

The Everbridge Mass Notification System was been adopted by Tecumseh and Leamington with excellent results and is now being implemented in LaSalle and Amhurstburg as well as Kingsville. The system provides fast notification for defined areas or user groups for both public and town employees.

The Everbridge Mass Notification System (branded locally as Kingsville Alerts system) will provide notification for three purposes; public emergency notifications, staff notifications and subscriber based community notifications.

During an emergency, it is important to provide the public with timely information. The system will notify the public with important information through home phone or, if provided, cell phone, text or email. The system will notify residents in the entire municipality or in a specific affected area. Municipal staff, remotely from any web-based computer, can activate the notification.

DISCUSSION

Upon approval of the 2017 budget, the Director of Financial Services conducted a key stakeholder meeting with senior staff. The Deputy Fire Chief arranged to have representatives from the fire and information technology departments in Tecumseh and Leamington attend to assist with establishing best practices. The goal of this meeting was to educate staff on the capabilities of the software and to seek input on establishing subscription categories, target audiences and basic standard operating procedures for the sending of notifications. With this information gathered, a series of support calls was set up with the vendor and key members of staff (Fire Chief, Deputy Fire Chief, IT Manager, Executive Assistant to CAO/Mayor and Director of Financial Services) to stage the implementation and training process.

The Kingsville Alerts system has two components: a public portal and an internal portal. The public portal contains the contact information of all town residents while the internal portal contains contact information for all town staff.

The staff notification will be utilized to disseminate important information to all town staff or specific groups of staff members. This may include emergency activations, important staff notices and building closures or disruptions.

The subscriber based community information requires members of the public to register for information that they specifically are interested in receiving. This may include notice of public meetings, road closures, service disruptions or cancellations.

The system is not used for weather notifications, political campaigns or information that is not emergency in nature or specifically defined in the subscriber selections. The use of social media will continue to be used for dissemination of social, cultural and recreational event information. The intent of the Kingsville Alerts system is to communicate business related information to the public. It is not intended to duplicate social media posts.

Town staff has received training on the Everbridge Mass Notification System and have created roll out information and public awareness campaign materials. The system will only be activated by trained and approved staff members.

On June 13, 2017 the Kingsville Alert system will be officially launched. The municipality has populated the system with telephone information from the white and yellow page directory. We will begin a roll out campaign through a web registry, public events and manual registration, which will add residents to add other forms of communication and subscription requests to the database. A test call out will be performed in targeted areas of the town to provide members of the public with awareness of the Kingsville Alerts system.

LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN

To maintain and improve the health, safety and well-being of our residents.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

The 2017 Budget included \$9,000 for implementation of the Everbridge software. Progress payments have been made to reflect the staged implementation to date. The project is expected to remain within budget.

CONSULTATIONS

Sandra Zwiers
Tony Iacobelli
Chuck Parsons
Jeff Dean
Tara Hewitt
Kait Donovan – Everbridge
Managers

RECOMMENDATION

That report titled Kingsville Alerts Mass Notification Launch is received.

Chuck Parsons

Chuck Parsons, CMM III
Fire Chief/C.E.M.C.

Peggy Van Mierlo-West

Peggy Van Mierlo-West, C.E.T.
Chief Administrative Officer