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## Evacuation Assistance in Richland and Wilkin Counties

During times of natural disasters such as a flood or tornado, evacuation assistance may be needed. Citizens of Richland/Wilkin County can register with Richland County Health Department or Wilkin County Public Health to have contact information placed on file in the event assistance is needed during a disaster. Examples of those who may want to register is someone with: a disability, walking difficulties, significant health issues, no family or friends to assist, social or behavioral challenges, or who is elderly. The information provided will be used by emergency personnel.

To register yourself, a family member or a neighbor on the Vulnerable Population Registry:

**Wilkin County** residents may go to [www.co.wilkin.mn.us](http://www.co.wilkin.mn.us) to fill out the form on line or call Wilkin County Public Health at 218-643-7122 and a staff member will assist you with completing the information over the phone.

**Richland County** residents may download the form by going to: [www.richlandcountyhealth.org](http://www.richlandcountyhealth.org).

Complete and return form:

- By mail: Richland County Health Department, 413 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue North, Wahpeton, ND 58075
- By fax: 701-642-7746
- By phoning: 701-642-7735 and a staff member will assist you with completing the information over the phone.

This newsletter is being sent out to help you stay in the loop and updated on what is happening with CERT in our community. If you have any suggestions for content please contact one of us [your CERT Team Leaders].

**WE HOPE YOU FIND THIS NEWSLETTER AND INFORMATION HELPFUL!**

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## Weather Spotter Training

On a drive to Minneapolis I drove into a severe thunderstorm. Lighting crashed all around, sheets of rain made everyone slow down to a crawl, and wind buffeted the sides of the car. As quickly as it had started, it was over as if walking through a doorway. A few miles down the road we saw the bright lights of a law enforcement vehicle speeding down interstate going the direction we had come from. A mile later we saw another, and then an ambulance. I wondered what I had missed. Later in the day I learned of a tornado that had passed through a camp ground killing one and injuring others.

Although I have longed to see a tornado I would prefer to see it from a distance. The question for all of us, if you want to see one or not, is how do we stay out the path of a twister?

The National Weather Service has provided training to emergency responders for decades. I try to take advantage of the free class as often as I can. And, certainly, not as often as I like to. I try to attend the class every year. Some concepts just take more than one class to grasp. Other concepts are easily forgotten.

You don't have to be an emergency responder to benefit from the class, as my story testifies. Who hasn't heard the storm sirens and run to the window to see what was going on? Or wondered if that cloud on the horizon is something to prepare for?

Well, after missing the class for several years in a row I decided to take advantage of online training through the National Weather Service. It has

its advantages such as working at your own pace, spending more time on one topic and less in another.

The following paragraph is from the educational web page linked on the Fargo/Grand Forks National Weather Service web site:

*The "SKYWARN® Spotter Convective Basics" module will guide users to a basic understanding of convective storms. Through three different scenarios, you will cover reporting and proper communication of local storm reports to the National Weather Service (NWS), personal safety during these events, and field identification of convective storm hazards. After completing the scenarios, you will be given the opportunity to practice identifying storm features from a spectrum of photos.*

The following link will take you to our regional weather service web site. <http://www.weather.gov/fgf/>. From there you can click on two links: Role of the Skywarn Spotter, and Skywarn Spotter Convective Basics. These classes will require you to register for the class. And you will be a recognized spotter once you are done.

Keep in mind that you will not be an expert when you have completed the course. But you won't be the least knowledgeable person with a nose pointed at the storm. While everyone else is hoping not to miss something you can be the one with the suggestion to take cover. Because unlike Dorothy you will not get to click your heals three times repeating, "there is no place like home...".

*Mike Goroski, CCC Member*

# CodeRED Weather Warning...

## ...The call before the storm



**STAY SAFE** – Richland and Wilkin Counties have both made CodeRED Weather Warning™ available to alert citizens in the path of severe weather. If you have not already done so, please take a moment to complete the on-line registration to be notified in the event of emergency situations or critical community alerts. Examples include: evacuation notices, bio-terrorism alerts, boil water notices, and missing child reports.

**ALERT TYPES** – Moments after a **severe thunderstorm, flash flood or tornado warning** has been issued by the National Weather Service, telephone messages will be sent to affected citizens. You may choose which warnings you would like. Simply uncheck the ones – severe thunderstorm, flash flood or tornado warning – that you do not wish to receive. Options that may become available in the future are warnings for severe winter weather and apps for your smart phone.

**CALLER ID** – You'll know the call is emergency related if you see one of the following numbers:

- 866-419-5000, Emergency Communications – for emergency notifications other than weather
- 855-969-4636, ECN Community – for general notifications
- 800-566-9780, Emergency CodeRED weather warnings

If you'd like to hear the last message delivered to your phone, simply dial the number back. Jill Breuer, Richland County Communications/911 Manager, recommends that you enter all three numbers into your cell phone so you know the call is emergency related.

**PRIVACY** – Your contact information remains private. It will only be used for messages delivered through the CodeRED system.

**OPT-IN TO GET THE CALL** – To sign up to receive alerts for any combination of severe weather warnings, simply follow the easy instructions for your county at [Richland County](#) or the [Wahpeton](#) website; or the [Wilkin County](#) website.

**NOTE:** If you are a CERT team member, you are registered for the CERT CodeRED list. The CERT CodeRED list will *only* be used to notify CERT team members if their services are needed in an emergency. If you want to receive the weather notifications, you still need to complete the on-line registration for the general public.

If your contact information changes, please notify Penny Seifert at 642-2392 or [pennyann@wah.midco.net](mailto:pennyann@wah.midco.net) so your CERT CodeRED information can be updated.

## Did You Know?

Did you know that teachers may be eligible for Continuing Education credits just by taking a CERT class? Please pass this information along to your teacher acquaintances. If they are interested in more information, ask them to call:

Penny Seifert, CERT Coordinator

[pennyann@wah.midco.net](mailto:pennyann@wah.midco.net) 701-642-2392



Are you interested in brushing up your skills learned in CERT Training? Training is available at: <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/IS317/> Another way to brush up on your skills is to sit in on a current running CERT course. Please contact Penny Seifert if you are interested.