

# Emergency Notification System

## *What YOU should know about Bedford's CodeRED® service*

**Question:** What is CodeRED® and why is it important to me?

**Answer:** CodeRED® is a new Bedford service by which City officials can notify City residents by telephone about emergency situations or critical community alerts. The system is capable of sending messages only to people affected by a particular situation, or, in the case of a widespread emergency, to the City's entire population.

The speed of the CodeRED® system (up to 60,000 calls per hour) is so great that the City is able to send a message to affected households almost as quickly as City officials become aware of the situation.

**Question:** Does this mean the City will be calling me constantly?

**Answer:** No. The City of Bedford respects your privacy. CodeRED® will be used only when emergency situations arise that you should know about.

*The system will be used to send messages only to those residents who are directly affected by a particular event.* For example, if you happen to live in an area for which a 'boil water' advisory has been issued due to a water main break, CodeRED® will call only you and your neighbors to deliver that very important health advisory.

If there is a City or region-wide emergency, all Bedford residents will be called and kept up to date on developments.

**Question:** For what kinds of situations will CodeRED® be used?

**Answer:** Severe weather alerts, utility outages, drinking water contamination, floods, evacuation notices, gas leaks, law enforcement emergencies, hazardous material spills – in short, any and all emergencies and community alerts.

**Question:** Why do I need CodeRED® when I have radio and TV to keep me informed?

**Answer:** CodeRED® is an additional measure of safety Bedford City officials believe all of our residents need and deserve. If power goes out, you may not be able to depend upon radio and TV. However, because telephone lines are self-powered and most people now have cell phones, the City can continue to keep you informed through messages delivered by CodeRED®.

Even if you have power, CodeRED® will probably be able to reach you with important information faster than TV and radio stations can put it on the air. That's because CodeRED® is a ***direct connection between you and the City of Bedford.***

And unlike some severe weather events, many emergencies occur without advance warning. In such cases, you may have no reason to turn on a TV or radio or you may be sleeping. That's when CodeRED® can help City officials alert you immediately and advise you to take appropriate action.

**Question: How will I recognize a CodeRED® message?**

**Answer: A CodeRED® message will have caller ID 999-911-9999. This is not a working number and you cannot call this number for information. It is for identification purposes only. A CodeRED® message will always begin, 'This is an emergency message from the City of Bedford'.**

**Question: What should I do if I receive a CodeRED® message?**

**Answer: Listen carefully to the entire message. It will be brief and will not be repeated. Follow the instructions given. You may be directed to a commercial TV or radio station for further information. Do not hang up until you have heard the entire message or you might miss vital information. Do not call 911 for further information unless directed to do so or if you need immediate aid from the police or fire department. You will only tie up the emergency lines.**

**Question: I have a cordless phone, and it does not work when the power goes out. How is the City going to be able to contact me?**

**Answer: There are two ways you can continue to receive telephone messages from the City through CodeRED®:**

- 1 Make sure you have at least one working corded telephone – and be sure to turn the ringer on.
- 2 The CodeRED® “Residential Data Collection” sign-up form gives you the option of filling in both a **Primary Phone number** and an alternate phone number. You can fill in the **Alternate Phone number** blank with another contact number such as your cell phone number or work number. Entering an alternate phone number will cause *BOTH* your primary and alternate phone numbers to be called.

Of course, no form of communication is guaranteed to remain in operation under severe conditions. CodeRED® *does* widen the safety margin by offering City residents another new and powerful means of learning about vital, timely information. You should continue to listen to warnings issued through the TV, radio and NOAA weather radios and warning sirens located throughout the City.

**Question: Will CodeRED® leave a message on a machine?**

**Answer: Yes, CodeRED® will leave a message on a machine or on voice mail. Part of the CodeRED® solution is the patented ability to recognize answering devices and leave the message completely in one pass.**

**Question: What happens if the line is busy?**

**Answer: If the line is busy, CodeRED® will try two more times to connect.**

**Question: What circumstances might prohibit CodeRED® from delivering a message to me?**

**Answer:**

If you have moved or changed your phone number and not registered your new contact information, CodeRED® may not be able to contact you.

If you have only cordless phones in your residence, the power is out and you have not registered an alternate phone number, CodeRED® will not be able to contact you.

If your line is busy for an extended period and your calls do not forward to voice mail or an answering machine in a busy condition, after three tries CodeRED® will stop calling your number. The City will receive a report of undelivered calls and can instruct CodeRED® to begin another round of calls to busy numbers. It's best to have an alternate number in the calling database for these situations.

If you have privacy manager on your main phone service, CodeRED® will not be able to contact you unless you have registered an alternate number that will accept the call.

**Question: Do I have to pay extra for CodeRED® service?**

**Answer: No. CodeRED® is entirely paid for by the City of Bedford at a cost of about 55 cents per resident per year.**

**Question: Does the City have my telephone number, or do I have to sign up to receive CodeRED® emergency calls?**

**Answer: If you have moved or changed your telephone number recently, you should definitely sign up for CodeRED® service or update information you have already provided. Any new information you supply will automatically replace old information.**

**Question: How do I sign up for CodeRED®?**

**Answer: The home page of Bedford's website, <http://www.bedfordoh.gov>, has a link to a CodeRED® registration form you can fill out online. This is the quickest way to sign up because the information you supply will immediately update Bedford's CodeRED® telephone number database. If you do not have access to the Internet at home, please consider using a computer at the Bedford Library or ask a friend or family member for assistance. On-line registration is the most efficient, accurate and private way to supply your information. Paper copies of the form will be available at all City facilities if you cannot register on-line. If for some reason you cannot obtain a form, you can call the receptionist at Bedford City Hall, 440-735-6551 for help.**

**Question: The registration form only allows me to enter a primary and secondary telephone number. What if I want to register additional numbers for my address?**

**Answer: After you submit the initial registration form, you may start the registration process again and submit more numbers for the same address.**

**Question: I have a business located in Bedford. Can I arrange to have CodeRED® call my business?**

**Answer: Yes. Go to the City's website <http://www.bedfordoh.gov>, and click on the CodeRED® link. When the Residential Data Collection form opens, click on the button labeled "Click to Switch to Business Data" and fill in the required information. *Please note that emergency calls can only be delivered to a direct dial number.* Automated attendants will disrupt the process and calls will not be**

delivered. Businesses should register their main number and establish a procedure for distributing the CodeRED® message to their workforce.

**Question: If I move out of Bedford, will CodeRED continue to call me?**

**Answer: Once the land line at your address is disconnected after your move, the system will drop that number in the next update. However, any alternate numbers will remain in the system until you ask them to be removed. Call the receptionist at Bedford City Hall, 440-735-6551, tell that person you've moved and request a 'CodeRED Number Removal Form'. This can be mailed, faxed or emailed to you. Once you've entered your information, signed and returned it to City Hall, the information will be forwarded to CodeRED and your numbers will be deleted.**

A vitally important service, CodeRED® is yet another way your Bedford City government is seeking to improve public communications and reach out to citizens.

***If you have any further questions about CodeRED®, please call at 440-735-6551.***