

August 23, 2005

In Case of Emergency – Identify Key Contacts

Somerset County Sheriff Frank J. Provenzano and Somerset County Office of Emergency Management Director LeRoy Gunzelman would like residents to know about an 'In case of Emergency' (ICE) campaign that can be helpful to people in an emergency situation.

Millions of cell phone users in the United States carry their phones with them wherever they go. Emergency personnel throughout New Jersey see this as an opportunity to create a lifeline to family members and friends who can provide critical information during an emergency.

EMT's and police often waste valuable time trying to figure out whom to contact in an emergency when an incident occurs. They look through wallets for clues and scroll through cell phone address lists. Because most people list their spouse by first name on the cell phone, it makes it more difficult to identify key contacts in the event of an emergency.

"You can make an officer's or EMT's job easier by adding the acronym "ICE" beside those people listed in your cell phone address book that you want to be contacted 'In Case of Emergency,'" said Sheriff Provenzano. "For example, contacts can be identified as 'ICE – Dad' or 'ICE – 1'."

"The Office of Emergency Management and the New Jersey State First Aid Council encourage cell-phone users to identify emergency contacts in their address lists. This will enable emergency responders and hospital staff to utilize cell phones to access contacts quickly in an emergency and alert family or friends," said Director Gunzelman, Office of Emergency Services.

Emergency services personnel rely upon information gathered at the scene of an emergency to make life and death decisions for unresponsive patients. Residents can help reduce the time it takes to contact family members by using ICE indicators on their cell phone.

The Web site for the 'In Case of Emergency' Campaign can be found at:
www.icecontact.com.

For more information, contact Sheriff Frank J. Provenzano at (908) 231-7143.