

Emergency notification now available by text and email too

The Capital Area Council of Government's Regional Notification System, the telephone-based warning system used by public safety agencies in CAPCOG's region since 2006 to share time-sensitive information with local residents, can now alert users by text and email too.

Formerly called the "Emergency Notification System," the tool previously was limited to notifying people included in the 9-1-1 database and those with cellphones registered on CAPCOG ENS.

The new RNS includes capacity to send messages by email or text and – eventually – Twitter and Facebook. Residents can register their cellphones, landlines, email addresses, pagers and other devices that receive text-based messages.

It also can be used for incidents that may not comprise emergencies but still significantly affect the public — a major traffic disruption, for example.

Sign up for alerts or update your current contact information today at wireless.capcog.org.

Annual Medicare open enrollment ends Dec. 7

CAPCOG's Area Agency on Aging (AAA) encourages eligible consumers to compare, choose or change their Medicare and prescription drug plans before annual open enrollment ends Dec. 7, 2013.

The annual open enrollment period, underway since Oct. 15, sets participants' plans for the following 12-month period.

AAA's Benefits Counseling Program has helped enrollees and family caregivers across the region sort the various Medicare options.

The federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services and the National Council on Aging is also on hand to assist. Consumers can visit www.medicare.gov for help or call 800-MEDICARE (800-633-4227).

NCOA's My Medicare Matters website now includes two additional tools to help in Medicare planning:

- RX Calculator, which estimates savings from switching Medicare Part D plans.
- Medicare QuickCheck, which helps participants review current coverage.

Learn more about AAA's Benefits Counseling Program and other free services at www.aacap.org.



Season of Giving: CAPCOG employees have raised more than \$600 this holiday season for two local charities that assist individuals and families in times of need. Participating staff are buying "dress-down days," which allow them to wear jeans and denim at work during selected days in December.

Upcoming Events

Visit www.capcog.org for more details

Basic Environmental Law Class, 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 10 Hays County Government Center

Regional Law Enforcement Academy (RLEA): Patrol Rifle Instructor Course, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday to Friday, Dec. 10-12 Hutto Range

CAPCOG Executive Committee, 10 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 11 Omni Austin Hotel at Southpark

CAPCOG General Assembly Annual Meeting and Luncheon, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 11 Omni Austin Hotel at Southpark

Central Texas Clean Air Coalition, 1-2:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 11 Omni Austin Hotel at Southpark-Rooms A/B

Criminal Justice Regional Planning, 9 a.m.-noon Friday, Dec. 20 (Rescheduled from Dec. 6) CAPCOG offices

Clean Air Coalition Advisory Committee, 1:30-3 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 2 Conference call

RLEA Crisis Intervention — Train the Trainer Course, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday to Wednesday, Jan. 6-8 CAPCOG Agave Room

Criminal Justice Advisory Committee Training and Strategic Plan Review, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 15 CAPCOG Pecan Room

Criminal Justice Grant Application Workshops, 9:30 a.m.-noon Friday and Tuesday, Jan 17 and 21 (Select one) CAPCOG Agave Room

RLEA Field Training Officer Course, 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday to Wednesday, Feb. 10-12 CAPCOG Agave Room

RLEA: Basic Peace Officer Course No. 72 (full time, day), April 14-Oct. 2 CAPCOG Mesquite Room

This month at CAPCOG

A closer look: CAPCOG's Ombudsman Program

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Criminal justice grant application workshops on tap

Mandatory workshops for criminal justice grants applicants scheduled

CAPCOG's Homeland Security division has scheduled two January 2014 workshops for potential grant applicants interested in state funding opportunities regarding criminal justice, juvenile justice and victim services.

Grant writers, coordinators and others involved in completing the applications or entering them at the CJD's eGrants website need attend only one of the mandatory workshops — Friday, Jan. 17, or Tuesday, Jan. 21 — to get details on applying for the following fiscal 2015 funding available from the Governor's Criminal Justice Division:

- General Victims Assistance
- Violent Crimes Against Women
- Criminal Justice Programs
- General Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Programs

Workshop attendance is mandatory for all applicants, new or returning. Applications submitted by organizations not attending one of the workshops will not be reviewed or prioritized by CAPCOG's Criminal Justice Advisory Committee (CJAC) or recommended for funding to the CJD.

The Office of the Governor, Criminal Justice Division, will make potential grantees' applications available to CAPCOG in March or April 2014 for review, prioritization and recommendations by CJAC in April 2014.

Register for one of the workshops today at www.capcogcriminaljusticeworkshops.eventbrite.com.

Learn more about CAPCOG's Criminal Justice Program at www.capcog.org.



Capital Area Council of Governments

Grant Alerts

U.S. Economic Development Administration FY 2014 Economic Development Assistance Programs, funding cycle 2
Deadline: Dec. 13, 2013
www.grants.gov

National Endowment for the Arts Our Town Application
Deadline: Jan. 13, 2014
www.grants.gov

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Grant Program
Deadline: Jan. 15, 2014
www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/cfp

Corporation for National and Community Service Ameri-Corps State and National Grant Competitions
Deadline: March 14, 2014, for funding cycle 3
www.grants.gov

U.S. Agency for Health Care Research and Quality Understanding User Needs and Context to Inform Consumer Health Information Technology Design Grant
Deadline: July 5, 2014
www.grants.gov

A closer look: CAPCOG's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program

CAPCOG Area Agency on Aging's Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program provides advocacy and friendly support for individuals living in nursing homes or assisted-living facilities. Here's a closer look at the program.

Ombudsmen investigate complaints made by residents, their families, or any other concerned party. They then work with complainants and facility staff to achieve resolutions. They can help one person resolve a problem, address issues that affect several residents or work to change a systemic problem. Their work takes many forms:

- **Handling complaints** — Ombudsmen support residents and families to resolve any problems or differences with the facility staff by defining concerns, explaining rights and identifying possible courses of action. An ombudsman can help resolve the problem in most cases, but complaints involving serious abuse or neglect are referred to the appropriate agency. In all situations, confidentiality is maintained and no information is released without the resident or legal guardian's permission.
- **Providing information** — Ombudsmen are a good source of information about selecting a long-term care facility, including guiding callers to CAPCOG's website for links to maps of both nursing homes and assisted living facilities in the region and to federal and state quality ratings.
- **Advocating system and legislative changes** — State and regional ombudsman programs work cooperatively with other advocacy organizations to recommend legislation and regulatory changes that affect older Texans.

The sheer volume of facilities in the CAPCOG region, including 77 nursing homes with a total capacity of 8,400 beds and 122 licensed assisted living communities representing about 3,638 beds, demonstrates the high need for this advocacy service.

CAPCOG's Ombudsman Program includes three staff members and approximately 40 trained and certified volunteers who routinely visit facilities throughout the region. With the program's aim to advocate for resident rights, quality of life and good resident care, staff attend resident and family council meetings and care-plan meetings. They help ensure residents are not inappropriately discharged and help train facility employees on resident rights issues.

In addition, ombudsmen help ensure that Medicaid-funded residents who have expressed the desire to move back home or to a less restrictive environment are provided the opportunity for referral to the Money Follows the Person program, a federal initiative in which many states participate.

Learn more about the Area Agency on Aging Ombudsman Program at www.aaacap.org.

Did you know?

The Ombudsman Program is mandated by the Older Americans Act of 1965, as amended in 1978.

Ombudsmen investigate complaints, report findings and help achieve resolution.

"Ombudsman" means "citizen representative." Some might consider it a longer word for "hero."

CAPCOG's Area Agency on Aging is seeking ombudsman volunteers. Call 512-916-6054 or toll free 800-252-2412.

Visit us online!
www.capcog.org

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The Capital Area Council of Governments (CAPCOG) was created by state statute and is governed by elected officials from the 10-county region it serves. Programs and services related to public safety and emergency response, environmental planning, economic and community development and the elderly are delivered at a regional level to leverage funding, maximize cooperation and eliminate duplication. CAPCOG serves Bastrop, Blanco, Burnet, Caldwell, Fayette, Hays, Lee, Llano, Travis and Williamson counties.

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