



NEWS & INFORMATION

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Wireless customers in Iowa can help return children to safety

The Iowa Utilities Board has partnered with the Iowa Department of Public Safety to promote the availability of Wireless AMBER Alerts to customers in Iowa. Iowans whose wireless devices are capable of receiving text messages may register to receive free notices of abducted children in their area.

A link to the national registration site is available on the IUB Web site, www.state.ia.us/iub, while www.iowaamberalert.org has information about Iowa's AMBER Alert Plan. Customers can also visit their wireless carrier's Web site or www.wirelessamberalerts.org to register.

"I am excited that we have joined with the Department of Public Safety to spread the word on this important program," said Board member Curt Stamp. "All Iowans with a wireless phone should enroll in this free program so that in the time of need as many people as possible are there to help."

The Wireless AMBER Alerts Initiative enables customers to aid in the recovery of abducted children. It is offered in conjunction with the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and the U.S. Department of Justice. When they register, Iowa customers will need to provide their wireless phone number and a zip code to receive alert notices. All information provided is kept confidential. Iowa AMBER Alerts are currently statewide, so registered customers will receive a text message for any alert issued in Iowa.

"When a child is abducted, time becomes critical," said Eugene T. Meyer, Commissioner of the Iowa Department of Public Safety. "It is vital that as much descriptive information as possible be provided to the public to assist law enforcement in recovering the child. The ability to send a text message to a cell phone when a child is abducted enhances the AMBER Alert program. The more eyes we have looking for a child when an abduction occurs, the greater likelihood we have of returning the child to their loved ones. We join the Iowa Utilities Board in encouraging Iowans to subscribe to this free service and possibly help law enforcement recover an abducted child."

The wireless initiative is part of the national AMBER Alert program, which was first authorized by President George W. Bush as part of the PROTECT Act signed in 2003. AMBER stands for "America's Missing: Broadcast Emergency Response" and was created in 1997 when Dallas-Fort Worth broadcasters teamed with local police to develop an early warning system.

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