

April 2016 Health Notes by Evelyn Ames

When Alone and Injured or Unconscious! Emergency Preparedness! What is ICE?

The population of Whatcom County that is 65 and older is 14% and probably less than 30% carry any information that indicates who we would like to have called/contacted if we suffered a serious injury such as falling and losing consciousness. If 911 is called and the EMT's came to your home, whom should they contact? How would they know what medications you are taking? Who your primary care doctor is? Which family member, relative, or friend to contact? Adding ICE (in case of emergency) contacts to your working mobile (cell) phone provides this information. ICE allows fire fighters, rescue workers, police, or doctors to check your cell phone and reach next of kin and people you want contacted if you are unconscious or unable to respond. One caveat to be aware of is the HIPAA laws (patient confidentiality). The contact dialed and who answers the phone call may not answer the responder's questions.

The program called ICE stands for **In Case of Emergency** and enables first responders (e.g., paramedics, firefighters, and police officers, and hospital personnel) to contact next of kin of those listed in a person's working mobile phone as well as important medical information. This information complements and supplements written information carried in a wallet or posted on a refrigerator/shelf door. The more contacts entered under ICE, the better (ICE 1, ICE 2, ICE 3, and so on).

What and How to Include Information: Adding ICE to Mobile (cell) Phone (<http://www.wikihow.com/Add-ICE-to-Your-Cell-Phone>)

1. **Think about who your emergency contact should be.** Choose emergency contacts who know about your allergies/medical conditions and who know how to contact your family.
2. **Add ICE contact to address book.** Open address book or contacts section on cell phone and create a new entry with the name ICE. Add contact information (enter name and relationship to you under "Notes").
3. **Add additional ICE contacts to address book** (ICE 2, ICE 3, etc. or ICE-name of person)
4. **Add an ICE app to a password protected phone.** "If your phone is password protected and you are incapacitated, an ICE contact won't do any good. Fortunately there are now apps available for Android, Windows, and iPhones that can add emergency contact information to your lock screen." "Install the app and input the relevant information. An emergency responder can then pick up your phone and access your emergency contact information, even if you are unable to supply the password."
5. **Add an ICE sticker to the back of your phone/laptop/bicycle helmet.** Stickers can be found at many pharmacies and doctor's offices, or purchased online. Fill-in with waterproof ink. Replace or updated as needed. Also, add detailed ICE form to front of refrigerator or other highly visible appliance/cabinet.

I interviewed Captain Jeff Brubaker (Community Paramedic with the Bellingham Fire Department). He said the most important information for ICE is the listing of medical conditions (medicine allergies, seizures, list of medications, medical contact, and what is normal/not normal healthwise, in other words, what the person's baseline condition is). This helps medics determine whether a person needs to be taken to a hospital's Emergency Department or whether a person can be assisted at home. A trip to ED can be expensive. He addressed some other questions:

- What about Home Alert Systems? Google to learn about the systems but know that they call 911, too. There is only one 911 system for Whatcom County.
- Purchasing a system depends on the person and being able to answer a phone call every day from the system.
- In place of a home alert system, he suggested carry a working mobile phone at all times. All cell phones have 911.
- When/who should let the fire department know where a key to one's house/condo/abode is located? **People at risk.** Ask for paper titled "Public Safety Key Box, Indemnification Agreement." The location is entered into dispatch. Paper form is obtained from the Bellingham Fire Department at 1800 Broadway.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/In_Case_of_Emergency

<http://www.webmd.com/news/20061016/put-ice-on-your-cell-phone>

<http://www.wikihow.com/Add-ICE-to-Your-Cell-Phone>

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.sdeba.icecardapp&hl=en>

<http://www.medids.com/free-id.php#.VwSTaKQrKhc>

http://www.aaa.com/AAA/057/static/news/AAA_ICE_CARD.pdf

ICE. IN CASE OF EMERGENCY



VEHICLE DRIVERS

PRIMARY (FULL NAME): _____

SECONDARY (FULL NAME): _____

ICE CONTACTS

PHYSICIAN: _____ ALLERGY (S): _____

MEDICAL CONDITION(S): _____

NAME / RELATION: _____

PHONE 1: _____ PHONE 2: _____

NAME / RELATION: _____

PHONE 1: _____ PHONE 2: _____

NAME / RELATION: _____

PHONE 1: _____ PHONE 2: _____

Law enforcement, medical and other first responders are trained to check cell phones for personal contact numbers listed under ICE. Please program your phone with your ICE numbers.