

Story originally printed in the La Crosse Tribune or online at www.lacrossetribune.com

Published - Friday, May 22, 2009

Officials advise coding emergency contacts into cell phones

By ANNE JUNGEN | ajungen@lacrossetribune.com

Let your cell phone do the talking for once.

Cell phone users are urged to code emergency contacts into their phones.

Emergency workers then can use those contacts to find family members and medical information when a person is unable to speak and not carrying identification, officials with Tri-State Ambulance, US Cellular and Verizon said at a joint news conference Thursday.

Users should designate one to three people as emergency contacts in their cell phone listings, and insert the acronym ICE — “In Case of Emergency” — before each of those names.

Each contact should be numbered or specified by relationship, such as “ICE husband” or “ICE doctor.”

“It works anywhere, anytime, whether you’re in La Crosse, the Twin Cities or Florida,”

said Tri-State Ambulance Director of Operations Tom Tornstrom.

Tri-State paramedics have shuffled through cell phones looking for the ICE contact, but the concept is not as popular as hoped.

An ICE refrigerator magnet also is recommended for injuries that occur in the home, they said.

All stories copyright 2000 - 2006 La Crosse Tribune and other attributed sources.