

NEWS

Jeffrey J. Hoffman
Sheriff of Oneida County
(715) 361-5100

RELEASE

ONEIDA COUNTY : For Immediate Release – Tuesday September 20, 2011 at 10:15am

Sheriff Jeff Hoffman announced today that he has utilized federal grant funds to bring the WI-VINE service to Oneida County and the service will notify crime victims when offenders are released from jail

Oneida County residents will now have quick access to custody information on offenders in the county jail. The Wisconsin Statewide Victim Notification Service (WI-VINE), an automated service that notifies registered crime victims, law enforcement personnel and concerned citizens and community members when offenders are released from jail, and also provides around-the-clock access to offender information either by telephone or use of the Internet. In addition to crime victims, the WI-VINE system can be used by family members, neighbors, business owners, law enforcement officers, criminal justice professionals – anyone impacted by crime – who is interested in knowing the location and custody status of criminal defendants and offenders housed in the Oneida County jail.

“Protecting the citizens of Oneida County is always our highest priority,” said Sheriff Hoffman. “The WI-VINE service provides an added level of protection because it gives everyone access to timely and accurate information on offenders in our county and other counties throughout the state that currently offer the WI-VINE service. Our department is appreciative of the support we have received from local law enforcement agencies and the recent records management system upgrade that allow us to participate in this grant and are delighted that we could make this important service available to the public.”

Individuals throughout the county who are interested in inquiring about an offender or receiving automated notification of an offender's change in status can call 1-888-944-8463 or log on to www.vinelink.com and search by an offender's name or booking number to obtain custody information. Those choosing to register for automated notification will be able to register multiple phones and/or e-mail addresses where they will be automatically notified when the offender is released, transferred, escapes from custody or their status changes.

In addition, live operator assistance is available 24 hours a day through the toll-free number, 1-888-944-8463, and seven days a week for callers who have questions or require additional help.

“The WI-VINE service has been in operation in various areas throughout the United States throughout the past sixteen years and the service is certainly designed with the victim in mind. It is very user-friendly,” Sheriff Hoffman said. “What makes it special is the automatic notification feature – as long as you’ve got a telephone or a computer, you can receive an automated alert anytime of the day or night. This level of protection and notification are critically important to anyone who’s concerned about the whereabouts of an offender.”

The activation of the WI-VINE service was funded by a grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Since 2005, the Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification (SAVIN) grant program administered by the BJA has nearly doubled the number of states providing automated victim notification. The goal of the SAVIN program is to increase public safety and improve vital criminal justice decisions by ensuring that victims and community members are given timely and accurate information that enhances their ability to protect themselves. Oneida County is proud to join many other counties in making the WI-VINE service available to the citizens of Wisconsin.

** END **