

Priority Phone Access Information

As the county prepares for a possible flooding event in the Green River Valley, priority phone access and timely notification of emergency events is critical. During a disaster situation the public telephone network and cellular networks may become congested making it difficult for government entities to coordinate response efforts effectively.

Priority phone service is available to essential staff through the National Communications System administered by the Office of Emergency Management.

What services are available?

- **Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS)** allows priority access to the public switched telephone network (“land lines”). Enrollees will be able to complete calls from landlines during an emergency (where others without GETS may encounter “busy” signals or disconnected calls due to overwhelmed phone systems).
- **Wireless Priority Service (WPS)** provides the same priority as GETS for cell phone users.

How much do GETS and WPS cost?

- **GETS:** Registration is free. Costs of 7 to 10 cents per minute are incurred only upon use during a disaster.
- **WPS:** WPS has a one-time \$10 set-up charge, plus up to \$4.50/month per phone line. Calling on this plan costs up to 75 cents per minute upon use.

How do I obtain GETS or WPS?

- King County essential staff should contact Rich Tokarzewski (Rich.Tokarzewski@kingcounty.gov) at the Office of Emergency Management (OEM) for additional details and/or to enroll in GETS and WPS.
- For those essential staff of other jurisdictions (e.g. City of Tukwila; City of Kent) please contact your agency’s emergency management group for more information about GETS/WPS enrollment.