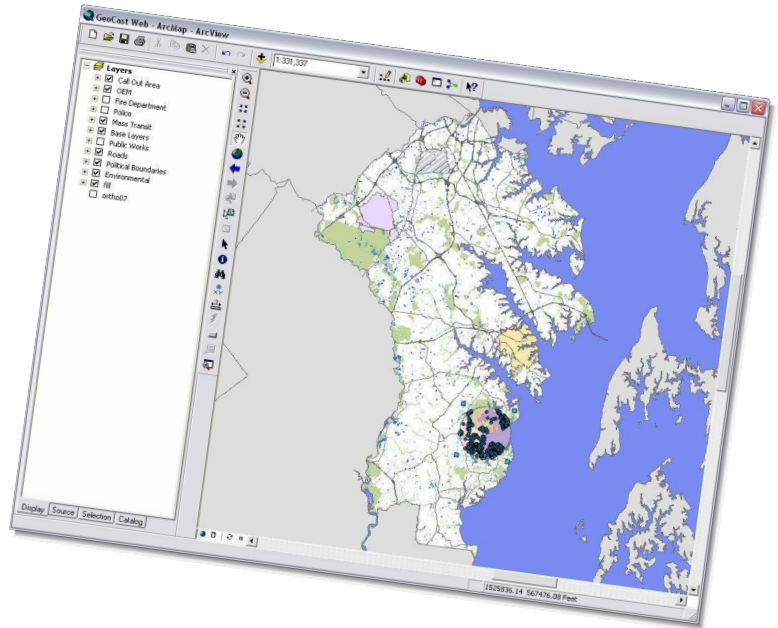




ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY'S EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

Dialogics is a telephone emergency notification system, sometimes referred to as Reverse 9-1-1. The system utilizes a local phone bank shared by Anne Arundel County and the City of Annapolis capable of reaching hundreds or thousands of county residences and businesses. In a large scale event when thousands of residents and businesses need to be reached quickly, the county can utilize the mass call center hosted by Dialogics, which can dedicate up to 500 phone lines to getting the message out.



The application, called GeoCast, is a geographical-based web application. County employees can access the system anywhere they have access to the internet. Looking at a map of the county, staff can zoom to the area of interest and draw a polygon selecting the area to be called. In most cases area immediately surrounding an incident would be called first followed by calls as necessary to secondary areas. The system uses phone numbers from Verizon's database and matches it to county structure address data. While not every residence or business may be in the system, the county is working to identify the gaps and enter them into the database as quickly as possible.

Once the area has been selected, a message can be recorded or typed and converted to voice by the system. The system can identify when voice mail has picked up and will leave the message. It also can identify TTY and send the text message for those that are hearing impaired. After a call out is completed, a report is created showing how many phone numbers were reached successfully.

The system can and has been used for getting out both emergency and non-emergency information. The Office of Emergency Management has identified a group of high flood risk structures whose occupants have been called when a serious threat of flash flooding was imminent, beyond the typical flooding that occurs with severe weather. The Police Department has used the system to warn a community about a rash of break-ins in their area and another about a series of assaults along with description of the perpetrator. Waste Management has been able to inform neighborhoods of changes to their trash pick-up days and locations. The Department of Corrections has recently been added as a user so that they can alert the communities surrounding their facilities to pertinent information.

The public should be on the look out for calls from the system in the future. The Caller ID will vary by phone subscriber but in most cases will say "Anne Arundel County Government." The number on the ID should not change, however, and will show up as: (410) 424-2660. At this time, if the county must reach out to the mass call center to notify a large portion of the population, the caller ID will show as originating from out of state.