

Last update:

Cities to offer wireless e-mail emergency alerts

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Come next week, the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul will start reaching out to technology-savvy residents by sending e-mail alerts of an urgent nature directly to their wireless devices.

The feature is an enhancement of an existing, free Web site service that since 2001 has allowed the cities to distribute, via standard e-mail messages, government information tailored to the interests of registered users. The new feature, which also is free, will alert people to traffic detours and snow emergencies, for example.

"We recognize that people are on the go and that more and more they can take advantage of these kind of services," said Sara Dietrich, a city spokeswoman in Minneapolis.

Laura Mortenson, a city of St. Paul spokeswoman, said the wireless feature is another opportunity to keep residents informed about city business.

Minneapolis and St. Paul are among six cities and counties in the country launching *GovDelivery version 2.0 on Tuesday*. Scott Burns, CEO of GovDocs, the St. Paul company that provides the GovDelivery system, said about 20,000 Twin Cities residents already subscribe to the e-mail service.

Burns said current subscribers to the city Web sites automatically will receive e-mail information about the wireless feature. Others will be able to register online at www.ci.stpaul.mn.us and www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us.

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