

# WJZ Baltimore, Maryland News Weather: Board Approves Sex Offender Notification Program

## Local News

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### Board Approves Sex Offender Notification Program



Suzanne Collins  
Reporting

(WJZ) Annapolis, MD The Maryland Board of Public Works Thursday approved a \$160,000 contract with Appriss, Inc., to provide a community sex offender notification enhancement to the Maryland Sex Offender Registry.

The Sex Offender Registry is a unit of the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services whose board is comprised of Governor Robert L. Ehrlich Jr., Treasurer Nancy K. Kopp and Comptroller William Donald Schaefer.

**WJZ'S Suzanne Collins** spoke to officials at the Maryland Sex Offender Registry who say the new tracking system is a step in the right direction.

"What we have found is that sex offenders do re-offend. It's a well known facts," says Dave Wolinski from the Sex Offender Registry.

This enhancement is part of Sex Offender Compliance and Enforcement in Maryland (SOCEM). The Community Sex Offender Notification Enhancement allows any citizen or organization (such as a school or day care center) in Maryland to register for immediate notification when a sex offender moves into the zip code(s) for which they are registered.

They can register (in English or Spanish) using a toll-free phone number or via the SOCEM web site and can be notified by phone or by e-mail.

There is no limit to the number of people who can register or the number of zip codes for which they can register. Citizens also may register to be notified when specific types of sex offender(s) have any change in address or compliance status.

"Now, anyone can easily find out where sex offenders are located in their communities, and when they change addresses," said Governor Ehrlich. "It's as simple as signing up either online or by making a telephone call to register."

There is an additional feature that will assist local law enforcement officials who have primary responsibility for registration compliance. They can register and monitor the movement of offenders within their jurisdiction or throughout the state.

These officials can be notified if any of these offenders are processed through any detention center monitored by VINE (Victim Information Notification Everyday), which includes all the Maryland detention centers and the majority of detention centers in 40 other states. VINE also is provided by Appriss.

"I am pleased that we are able to implement a notification system that will enhance our comprehensive sexual offender initiative for communities and law enforcement officials," said Governor Ehrlich.

Since 1994, Appriss has provided innovative technology solutions that help hundreds of local, state, and Federal government agencies to serve and protect their citizens. Through products like VINE, Appriss is noted for improving the efficiency, effectiveness and accessibility of government agencies across the country.