



Media Room
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Governor Doyle Announces Expansion of Victim Notification System to Improve Community Safety

MADISON - Governor Jim Doyle today announced the expansion of the Wisconsin Victim Information and Notification Everyday (WI-VINE) Service, an automated system for victims to receive timely information about the location and status of criminal defendants and convicted offenders in county jails and other facilities. The Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) is overseeing the creation of a statewide automated victim information and notification system as part of a \$1.2 million grant awarded to the state by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance.

"This new statewide system will help us to keep our communities safer and more informed," Governor Doyle said. "Now, through the assistance of our law enforcement partners and other stakeholders, we will be able to offer crime victims key information about convicted offenders and defendants in Wisconsin and alert them to any changes in their status."

The announcement was made by DOC Secretary Rick Raemisch on behalf of the Governor at the Marinette County Jail. Marinette County Jail is the first facility in Wisconsin to activate the service as part of the expansion which will include 18 additional counties in the coming months. The DOC as well as Dane and Outagamie counties have operated VINE for close to a decade. The service will eventually be statewide.

"Our ultimate goal is to ensure that all victims in Wisconsin have the means and opportunity to have access to information and to receive notification about the status of a defendant or offender as they move through the criminal justice process," Secretary Raemisch said. "The WI-VINE Service is meant to enhance Wisconsin's already strong framework to assist crime victims, including the crucial network of personal victim advocacy services currently provided by victim/witness coordinators and others."

In Marinette County, the WI-VINE system will directly interface with the jail's daily booking information, collecting data including status changes for each offender or criminal defendant. Individuals who enroll for the service will be able to access this information 24 hours a day, seven days a week through a toll-free telephone number (1-888-WI-4-VINE) or through the Web at www.vinelink.com. They also will be able to sign up for automated notification when a particular offender or criminal defendant's status changes.

Marinette County Sheriff James Kanikula added, "The WI-VINE Service is a system that serves not only crime victims, but also 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 Marinette County Jail. We are pleased to be partnering with the Department of Corrections to make this community resource available."

The 18 additional counties that will be activating the WI-VINE Service for their jail facilities in the coming months include Ashland, Buffalo, Chippewa, Door, Douglas, Eau Claire, La Crosse, Milwaukee, Monroe, Ozaukee, Pierce, Rock, Shawano, Taylor, Trempealeau, Waukesha, Waupaca and Winnebago.