



**The Business Council  
of Fairfield County**

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### **Fairfield County Business Alert Launched in City of Stamford**

Stamford, Connecticut; Friday, October 28, 2005 -- The Business Council of Fairfield County, in partnership with PricewaterhouseCoopers, Send Word Now, and the City of Stamford, today unveiled an emergency notification and alerting system that will assist businesses in their responses to and recovery from an emergency. Known as the Fairfield County Business Alert, the system enables businesses to receive information directly from the City's public safety and private sector officials in the event that an unexpected crisis occurs. "Last month's natural disasters along the Gulf Coast have given us a stark demonstration of the importance of public and private sector cooperation in preparing for and responding to emergencies," said Christopher Bruhl, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Business Council of Fairfield County.

Involving the business community in disaster preparation and response is critical. With 85% of the critical infrastructure either owned or operated by the private sector, actions of the private sector must mesh with those of the government sector.

"In the event of an emergency, the number one priority for the Business Council's Security and Crisis Management Forum is to be able to communicate directly with the public officials to get timely and relevant information needed to protect employees and minimize business interruption", said Jennifer Kearney, of Pricewaterhouse Coopers and Vice-Chair of the Business Council Security and Crisis Management Forum.

The need for a public-private communication network was identified in the City of Stamford Weapons of Mass Destruction Tabletop exercise sponsored by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on September 15, 2003. "The City of Stamford and Business Council are taking lessons learned from this exercise and putting them into best practice. We heard this need and have found a great resource in the Fairfield County Business Alert," said William Callion, Stamford's Director of Public Safety, Health and Welfare.

Using the technology of New York City based Send Word Now ([www.sendwordnow.com](http://www.sendwordnow.com)), messages can be sent through the Internet, from an email or a live operator. In minutes, registered users will receive a message through multiple phone numbers, email addresses, text messaging devices, and pagers simultaneously. “This is a great tool for business and an example of how the private sector and government can work together,” said Michael Sher, Executive Vice President, SWN Communications, Inc.

#### Next steps in security

Earlier this summer, the City of Stamford, in cooperation with the Business Network of Emergency Resources (BNet) and The Business Council of Fairfield County, launched the Stamford Corporate Emergency Access System (CEAS). Businesses can identify and pre-certify key employees whose job functions are considered essential and who need access to a restricted area following an emergency. “This is a tremendous initiative for all businesses,” said Peter Picarrillo, Executive Director, Business Network of Emergency Resources, Inc. “The City of Stamford is demonstrating its willingness to work with the business community, first with implementation of the CEAS program and now with the Fairfield County Business Alert.”

“We are committed to making Stamford one of the most prepared cities in the nation,” said Mayor Dannel Malloy. “An effective communication channel from the City to the business community will ensure that businesses both large and small receive timely information to implement business continuity plans or enhanced security arrangements.”

#### Fairfield County Business Alert Used in National Security Exercise

In April, several members of the Business Council of Fairfield County participated in TOPOFF 3, the congressionally mandated exercise that took place in Connecticut, New Jersey, Washington, D.C., Canada, and the United Kingdom. As part of the TOPOFF 3 exercise, the Fairfield County Business Alert was put through its paces. Private sector participants were linked up and able to communicate with the State Office of Emergency Management and Homeland Security throughout the exercise.

For more information about the Fairfield County Business Alert or the Stamford Corporate Emergency Access System, contact Tanya Court, Director of Public Policy and Programs, The Business Council of Fairfield County at 203-705-0668.

*About The Business Council of Fairfield County*

*The Business Council is a private, non-profit corporation headquartered in Stamford serving businesses in Fairfield County. It is governed by a volunteer board of twenty-five directors and served by a professional staff of seven. The corporation was formed by the merger of three organizations in 1970, the oldest of which had been founded in 1890. Today, The Business Council has 400 members who locally employ more than 30,000 people. It serves as a catalyst for private sector involvement in public policy and is the vehicle for a network of business leaders to address key issues facing the region as well as to strengthen their own businesses. While perhaps best known for the active involvement of large, national and international firms, The Business Council is deeply committed to serving businesses of all sizes and industries.*

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