



City of Ketchum

News Release

July 7, 2015

Note to editors: The technical training exercise is not open to the public or the press. However, we would like for the public to know why there will be an unusually high number of emergency responders and vehicles in Ketchum.

Emergency Responders to Gather in Ketchum Thursday for Training

Simulated Failure and Recovery of Landline Communications

Emergency responders from throughout the state will gather here Thursday to take advantage of Ketchum's state-of-the-art communications equipment for a training session simulating a widespread failure and recovery of all landlines.

Participating agencies include the Idaho National Guard, the Boise Fire Department, the Idaho State Police and emergency service agencies from throughout Blaine County. A representative from the Federal Emergency Management Agency in New York also will attend.

Participants will practice rerouting their communications in case of a possible failure. For example, when emergency services agencies had an equipment failure during a football game at Albertsons Stadium in Boise last fall, communications were rerouted through Ketchum, according to Ketchum Fire Chief Mike Elle.

Ketchum has state-of-the-art communications equipment that meets all national standards, said Sean Tajkowski, network consultant to the city.

Last year Ketchum replaced an antiquated telephone and Internet system with a new city-wide fiber-optic network. The fire department also began using a state-of-the-art communications system that integrates cell phone and radio communications over the past year.

"One of my first goals as mayor was to build a reliable emergency communications network so we can provide essential services at all times. We now have redundant equipment at various locations, as well as satellite backup," Mayor Nina Jonas said.

"Cities throughout the nation are facing the issue of a lack of national standards for infrastructure. Radios on different bandwidths do not necessarily communicate with each other, for example," she said. "We devoted a significant amount of staff time to this project. Today we have an exemplary system, and are proud to assist other agencies that want to use and replicate our city communications network for training."

The all-day exercise will begin at 10 a.m.

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About the City of Ketchum

The city of Ketchum is located in the Wood River Valley in south central Idaho. Founded in 1880 during the mining boom, Ketchum is now regarded as one of the most popular destinations for winter and summer visitors due to its world-class skiing, mountain biking, fishing, hiking, restaurants, art galleries and shopping. The city of Ketchum hosts the famous annual Wagon Days Parade, held on Labor Day weekend, and numerous other year-round attractions. Ketchum is home to more than 10,000 full- and part-time residents. For more information about the city of Ketchum, visit www.ketchumidaho.org.

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