

CASE STUDY: Northern California Presbyterian Homes & Services



How Northern California Presbyterian Homes & Services Uses Send Word Now to Maintain Safety, Security, and Reliability for its Residents

Northern California Presbyterian Homes and Services (NCPHS) is a not-for-profit organization committed to enhancing the quality of life for older adults by offering senior retirement communities and community services in the San Francisco Bay Area and Mendocino County. NCPHS offers both independent and assisted living alongside skilled nursing services, and prides itself on maintaining a safe, secure, and pleasant home for its residents. That's why NCPHS turns to Send Word Now when it needs to send critical and timely messages during drills, earthquakes, fires, state inspections, and other building-related emergencies.

Efficiency, Backed By Send Word Now

Ray Boudewyn, Director of Engineering at NCPHS, explains that the facility uses Send Word Now for minor incidents, as well as a part of its all hazards plan. The system has been set up to support the community's color code system, and employees are trained to use standardized color and location designators alongside Send Word Now's pre-defined groups and scenarios.

"For example," he elaborated, "An emergency responder can send an alert to the facilities team in location A by selecting that group and writing the message 'code red - facility A - storage room' to quickly indicate that there is a fire in that area and that they should respond accordingly."

"All of our ID cards have the color code system and Send Word Now login information on the back," he continued. "Employees can easily turn over their cards to access information whenever they need it." Employees that have access to the platform include department directors, executive team members, maintenance directors, security forces, and receptionists.

Preparing For State Inspecting

NCPHS provides skilled nursing services at four of its facilities, and the California Department of Health conducts annual inspections of the organization's practices. These inspections are unannounced and unpredictable. "Sometimes inspectors come at 4:00 AM, and we need to be prepared for that," said Boudewyn. "Sometimes the day shift is not present, and we need to get them in to work quickly. We can use Send Word Now to message staff members at any hour during the day."

He added, "When we undergo state inspections, inspectors are actually impressed with our communications platform. A lot of facilities have a hard time with traditional telephone trees, and we pride ourselves on our ability to reach critical staff members quickly. Send Word Now helps to make a good program even better."

The California Great Shake Out

On October 21st, NCPHS participated in the 2010 California Great Shake out, along with thousands of other organizations throughout the state. The organization conducted a Level 3 Exercise, a one hour drill involving all

residents and over 800 employees throughout eight facilities in Northern California. The first drill, which took place at 10:21 AM on the morning of the 21st, was complemented by a second and third drill at 10:21 PM later that evening and 02:21 AM the next day, respectively.

While all residents were asked to drop, cover, and hold on as a part of the Great Shake Out, some independent living residents participated in their own drill. They simulated the emergency as if no staff members were present. Additionally, every resident at Sequoia San Francisco was given a Red Cross bag stocked with emergency supplies and one day of rations. They were provided with informational pamphlets to read during the drill, which were designed to test their familiarity with all available emergency materials at the facility.

NCPHS relied on Send Word Now's scheduled alerts feature to send pre-written alerts to all critical staff members just moments before the drill. Boudewyn was extremely happy to use the service, particularly Send Word Now's scheduled alerts. He explained, "When I'm at the command post, I'm busy, and not having to send the notice during the exercise is a real relief. It's one item off of my list."

The Send Word Now Competitive Edge

NCPHS has been using Send Word Now since 2006, when it left behind "the old fashioned way of using telephone trees," said Boudewyn. "The old system was very time consuming and hit-or miss. With Send Word Now, everything is automated. It is the most reliable and user-friendly notification system available today."

"Additionally, the scenarios feature is invaluable. We have worked hard on developing our own color code system, and by using pre-defined Send Word Now scenarios, we can make rapid communication even



faster." He added, "With this software, we have gained the comfort of knowing that we can get in touch with people very quickly and accurately. And that is priceless."

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-Ray Boudewyn
Director of Engineering, NCPHS

Why Send Word Now

By tailoring its services to the needs of its customers, Send Word Now consistently provides innovative notification solutions that outmatch its competitor's offerings. Through the use of conference bridges, multiple language messaging, and unique features such as WeatherBlast and BlackBerry PIN to PIN messaging, customers can take advantage of Send Word Now's customizable platform to maximize their communication efforts.

Send Word Now is the leading worldwide provider of on-demand alerting, response, and incident management services for both routine and emergency communication. The easy-to-use, web-based emergency notification service is used by government agencies, municipalities, universities, non-profit organizations and businesses, including many Fortune 500 companies, to ensure fast, effective, two-way communication in real-time. Send Word Now's Alert Tracer® provides a full audit trail of messages sent and received for after-action reporting and follow-up. Designed to reach anyone, anywhere, anytime, with any device over any type of connection, Send Word Now's mass notification system is capable of transmitting hundreds of thousands of voice and text messages in minutes.