

## **Media Release**

TO: All Media

FROM: Lt Darin Powers, Streetsboro Police Department

DATE: Monday January 16, 2012

RE: New Community Notification Tools

STREETSBORO OH – The City of Streetsboro Safety Forces are now utilizing two new tools to send out important notifications to city residents. Beginning this week, the police and fire departments will begin using the Portage County Reverse 911 system and an online tool called Nixle. These tools together will allow notifications regarding emergencies and advisories to be sent to residents via landline phones, text messaging and email.

The Portage County EMA office has had a Reverse 911 system in place for some time but in the past, those alerts had to be sent out through the EMA office. The EMA office has recently made that system available to the Streetsboro Police Department so that alerts can be sent out locally. According to Streetsboro Police Lt Darin Powers, “When we determine an alert is necessary, we highlight the area to be notified on a map. A message is typed into the computer and the notification is activated. The residents, businesses and/or schools in the highlighted area will receive a call on their landline phone and a computerized voice will read them the notification.” As of now, the system is limited to landlines only and the notifications take time since the system makes about 22 calls per minute.

Nixle is a provider of mass notification services for public safety agencies. The system is used to disseminate information ranging from day-to-day activities such as traffic alerts to information on emergency situations. As of now, more than 4600 government agencies have adopted Nixle for their means of real-time communication with constituents. The system does require residents to register in order to receive alerts. Registration can be done either by visiting their website at [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com) or by texting their zip code (44241 for Streetsboro residents) to 888777. Once registered, users can set up how they receive alerts (text, email, online) and the type of alerts they want to receive. There is also a Nixle iPhone app in the iTunes App Store.

“Nixle and Reverse 911 are both additional tools to keep our citizens informed on time sensitive events in the community. Some examples when one or both of these services would be used are: Evacuation due to a HAZMAT spill, a missing child, a road closure or delay due to a traffic crash, wanted subjects in a specific area or a boil alert. Again these are examples but the possibilities are endless. Keeping the community aware of events in a timely manner not only benefits the community but also the safety forces as we try to do our job safely and effectively,” said Powers. Streetsboro Mayor Glenn Broska had this to say about these services, “The safety of our residents is paramount. By combining Nixle, Reverse-911 and the social media’s we can help to ensure that all of our residents receive timely notification of weather warnings and other important messages that may adversely affect their lives and well-being.”

Both the Streetsboro Police and Fire Departments have websites, Facebook pages and Twitter pages where information is posted daily to keep the community informed. Nixle and Reverse 911 are both unique and different tools to get information out to the public and both services are free. “In today’s

age of social media, 24 hour news, internet and smart phones, it is important for our safety forces to find the best tools to keep our citizens informed at the lowest cost. However, for these services to work, it is important for our residents to “LIKE” the Streetsboro Police and Streetsboro Fire departments on Facebook, FOLLOW us on Twitter and register at [www.Nixle.com](http://www.Nixle.com) or just text 44241 to 888777 to start receiving our Nixle updates.” says Powers.