



WAYLAND POLICE DEPARTMENT

WAYLAND, MASSACHUSETTS 01778



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Wayland Police Department

Press Release

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WAYLAND SILVER ALERT PROGRAM

The Wayland Police Department in conjunction with the Wayland Council on Aging and various assisted living facilities in Wayland, has developed the Wayland Silver Alert Program in order to help improve the response time when a person with Alzheimer's Disease, dementia, or other severe cognitive impairment is reported missing.

The Silver Alert Program is part of Wayland's efforts to implement the Massachusetts' Silver Alert Community Response System on a local level. The Massachusetts Silver Alert Law outlines a set of procedures and communications protocols among state and local public safety and human service agencies in order to identify people with dementia who have wandered or become lost and return them safely to their homes.

Over sixty (60%) percent of people with Alzheimer's or a related disorder will wander. Any family that is directly affected by dementia should consider registering for Silver Alert. Very few families expect a family member to go missing until it happens for the first time. Approximately six in ten dementia victims will wander at least once, health-care statistics show, and the numbers are growing worldwide, fueled primarily by Alzheimer's disease. If not found within 24 hours, up to half of wandering seniors with dementia suffer serious injury or death.

The program involves working with people who have a family member at risk of wandering in order to collect information and a recent photograph that can help the police identify and locate the person. Collecting this confidential information before an incident occurs enables the police department to begin search procedures immediately, as collection of data after the person has already gone missing can delay an effective search for an hour or more, increasing the chances that the wanderer will be in danger.

There is no age requirement to be entered into this program. Residents who have a loved one with a serious cognitive impairment are encouraged to contact Detective Sergeant Jamie D. Berger (jberger@wayland.ma.us) at 508-358-4721 for more information.