

Dane County Exec. Parisi: Joins DA Ozanne to announce new domestic violence efforts

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New Alarms Will Save Lives

Today Dane County Executive Parisi and District Attorney Ozanne announced Dane County will be purchasing emergency alarms and radios that will be placed in the homes of those at risk of being victims of domestic violence. The alarms will connect directly to the Dane County 911 Center, triggering an automatic police response when activated.

“Those about to commit an act of domestic violence now need to think twice before going through that door, wondering if the next step they take toward a victim will be the one that sets off an alarm on police radios across this county,” Parisi said. “These alarms will save lives and are an important tool to help those in the most danger to have police respond as quickly as possible.”

The alarms are being bought through a combination of county dollars and a \$100,139 Victims of Crime Act grant Dane County successfully applied for through the federal government. Dane County is contributing \$26,040 to the project, a 20% match to the grant. The dollars will help purchase five of the alarm systems and a resolution approving the local share of funding will be introduced at this week’s

County Board meeting.

Domestic violence is too common. The Dane County DA's office receives approximately 3,000 referrals each year from law enforcement for domestic violence related crimes. National statistics show that less than 1/4 of domestic violence is ever reported to law enforcement. Nationally, one in four women and one in seven men will be the victim of physical or sexual assault at the hands of an intimate partner in their lifetime. In 2017 alone Domestic Abuse Intervention Services in Dane County fielded more than 18,000 calls on our 24-hour help line.

"We are trying to protect victims who may be in imminent danger," said District Attorney Ozanne. "With a lack of emergency housing, home alarms provide a needed tool in providing safety options to victims and their children."

The new alarms are Dane County's latest initiative at confronting domestic violence. Just a couple of years ago, County Executive Parisi allocated \$2.5 million in county dollars to help complete the fundraising campaign to construct the new domestic violence shelter for DAIS on North Sherman Avenue. Along with helping build that shelter to help serve more victims, Dane County has a Social Worker in the Adult Protective Services Unit, who is partially funded by a VOCA Grant and addresses issues of domestic violence in later life. Dane County also has a Commission on Sensitive Crime Community Coordinated Response and contracts with Domestic Abuse Intervention Services for legal services, crisis intervention, and hotel vouchers for \$249,430 a year. Dane County Human Services also addresses the consequences of domestic violence in other areas of the Department, especially Child Protective Services, and other purchased services address these issues in the context of the family services that we contract for.

"DAIS is incredibly grateful to be part of a strong network of partners in Dane County working collaboratively to support victims of domestic violence with serious safety issues," said Shannon Barry Executive Director for DAIS. "Additional Emergency Home Alarms and radios for victims utilizing the services of the District Attorney's office Crime Response Program will have a significant impact for victims who are the most at risk of potential homicide by their batterers."