



Governor Rell debuts major upgrades to CT sex offender registry

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By Governor Rell's Office

Governor M. Jodi Rell today demonstrated major upgrades in Connecticut's "Megan's Law" sex offender registry, debuting an updated site that is far easier to for parents to use to protect their children and offers exciting enhancements such as interactive maps and the ability to e-mail notifications to friends and neighbors.

The registry can be accessed by visiting www.ct.gov/dps and clicking "Sex Offender Registry" on the left side of the website.

The upgrades help the state meet the new requirements of the federal Adam Walsh Act.

"The Connecticut sex offender registry was a national model when it was first rolled out – and now we are taking it to a new level," Governor Rell said at a news conference at the Department of Public Safety headquarters in Middletown. "Our families must have every tool available to keep their children safe. This new, more user-friendly registry is a tool like none other and – with Halloween just a few days away – the timing could not be better.

"The technology is truly impressive," the Governor said. "This is something all of us in Connecticut can be grateful to have – a tool for both law enforcement and families. And while society demands this tool, I am always reminded that at the heart of both 'Megan's Law' and the 'Adam Walsh Act' is an attack on a child. States must have the ability to track sex offenders with the best technology available. Our children should be remembered for the joy they bring, the dreams they fulfill – not tragedies."

Connecticut's "Megan's Law" sex offender registry was created by law passed during the 1997 legislative session and established in 1998. Like similar databases in the other states, it is named after 7-year-old Megan Kanka of New Jersey, who was killed in 1994 by a sex offender living near her home.

The Adam Walsh Act, passed by Congress and signed into law in July 2006, requires significant improvements to sex offender registries, including a wider range of offenses and offenders for whom registration is required. The law also expands the amount of information available to the public about offenders and requires offenders to make periodic, in-person appearances to verify and update their information.

Connecticut's upgraded system offers distinct links for searches and a tutorial that helps users navigate the site. It also expands search capabilities, allowing users to scan by street location, city or town, registrants' first and last names or by compliance status – including producing a list of all registrants who are not meeting registration requirements. A mapping function allows the information to be overlaid on maps of school locations, day care centers and other sites. Fliers can be produced on community topics such as general safety, Halloween and other holiday safety tips and guidelines for parents who need to talk to their children about how to stay safe.

From a law enforcement perspective, the new system – and upgrades coming soon – will provide additional tools to parole and probation officers, police and others who supervise offenders. Offender movements in and out of a jurisdiction will be tracked, officials will be able to register offenders remotely from Department of Correction facilities and the system will be linked with other state law enforcement databases.