

## Card list "3 a.m." resources

### Help for domestic violence survivors

The phone numbers listed in what area law enforcement officials are calling "3 a.m. cards" are staffed 24 hours a day by live operators or counselors. Here are some of those numbers: **Domestic violence**

- Statewide Emergency Hotline — 866-834-4357
- Family Crisis Services — 721-0199

#### **Sexual assault**

- Statewide crisis & support line — 800-871-7741
- SASSMM — 800-822-5999, 725-1500 or 725-2181

#### **Child abuse**

- Child Protective Services (DHHS) — 800-452-1999

#### **Elder and adult abuse**

- Adult Protective Services (DHHS) — 800-624-8404

#### **Mental health crisis, suicide prevention**

- Sweetser Crisis Team — 373-3003

#### **Veterans services**

- After 5 p.m. & weekends — 800-273-8255
- Daytime — 623-8411

#### **Emergency rooms and medical help**

- Mid Coast Hospital — 729-0181
- Parkview Adventist Medical Center — 373-2000
- Poison Control Center — 888-568-1112

Steve Edmondson, domestic violence investigator for the Sagadahoc County District Attorney's Office, joined area law enforcement leaders and public safety advocates Tuesday in unveiling what they're calling "3 a.m. cards."

The sturdy, laminated reference cards list phone numbers for various medical and domestic violence support organizations that enlist live operators 24 hours a day. Edmondson said the cards will be handed out to all law enforcement officers working in county, state and local departments in Sagadahoc and eastern Cumberland counties.

Edmondson said the inspiration for the cards “came from anecdotal information from officers, who had all these brochures with them, but didn’t know which numbers to call at 3 a.m.” We nicknamed it the ‘3 a.m. card’ because that’s when an officer is going to be at one of these scenes, where they’ll need to get ahold of a live person to make a referral,” he continued.

Edmondson said members of the Sagadahoc County and Eastern Cumberland County Working Group on Family Violence then conducted a survey of area law enforcement officers and the anecdotal accounts were confirmed: “The consistent theme was not knowing what number to call to get live help during those late-night or early morning incidents.”

Operators or counselors at the listed organizations will be prepared to arrange transportation to a safe location for the victims of the domestic violence, help take steps toward filing for protection orders and make more permanent living accommodations for survivors of abuse looking to escape an abusive situation.

“This card gives officers phone numbers to call 24 hours a day to get ahold of a live operator to help the victim,” Edmondson said.

The concept is simple enough, and Edmondson said the cards have piqued the interest of the Maine Chiefs of Police Association for wider distribution throughout the state.

Jim Peavey, chairman of the working group, noted that veterans support organizations are listed on the card as well. He said area law enforcement officials have worked aggressively to develop and revise the cards during the past year.

“(Officers like Edmondson, Bath Police Chief Michael Field and Sagadahoc County Sheriff Joel Merry) don’t just come along and show up at the party,” Peavey said. “They’re leaders in this effort.”