

# Long-awaited jury pagers are on track

*System could start once it warms up*

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## MACOMB COUNTY

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First, the problem was money. Then, the plan hit a licensing snag.

But after nearly a year of talk, a proposal to give Macomb County jurors pagers so they can walk around Mt. Clemens while waiting to be called is back on track and could begin when the weather warms, officials said.

"We're just waiting on installation and training," said Crystal Brenner, assistant to Clerk Carmella Sabaugh.

The latest setback came when the county sought approval from Industry Canada, the Canadian version of the Federal Communications Commission. Both agencies had to sign off on the antenna needed to ensure it wouldn't interfere with other frequencies, said Todd Schmitz, the county's deputy clerk.

Schmitz said the pager ven-

dor, USA Mobility, made a mistake in paperwork describing how tall the antenna would be, but once the error was corrected, Industry Canada OK'd the plan. The FCC granted approval Friday.

The antenna is to be about 177 feet tall atop the county building downtown, Schmitz said. Jurors are to be able to wander about a mile from the courthouse, or a 10-minute walk, without hitting a dead spot, Schmitz said.

Once a juror is paged, he or she will have 10 minutes to return to the courthouse or be held in contempt of court.

The program costs \$27,564, and more than half — \$15,000 — is being funded by downtown business owners who said they hope jurors will patronize their stores.

The remaining cost is to be covered by the county. Schmitz said that with 20,000 jurors passing through the county system each year, the program will average 31 cents per juror over the next two years.

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