

## 9-1-1 General Information

### What is 9-1-1?

9-1-1 is the number most people in the U.S. and some in International countries call to get help in a police, fire or medical emergency. In some places, you may be able to be connected with Poison Control by calling 9-1-1, but you should check with local officials in your area to make sure. A 9-1-1 call goes over dedicated phone lines to the 9-1-1 answering point closest to the caller, and trained personnel then send the emergency help needed\*\*.

### What is Enhanced 9-1-1 (E9-1-1)?

Enhanced 9-1-1, or E9-1-1, is a system which routes an emergency call to the 9-1-1 center closest to the caller, AND automatically displays the caller's phone number and address\*\*. The 9-1-1 operator will typically ask the caller to verify the information, which appears on his or her computer screen. If you use TTY/TDD, dial 9-1-1 and place the phone on TTY/TDD receiver, wait for 9-1-1 operator connect with you, then operator will see your address and phone number. If you are registered with Video Relay Services (VRS) or IP relay service providers for E9-1-1 for your videophone or IP relay, E9-1-1 will work. Contact your VRS or IP relay service providers and give them your current phone number and address and ask if you are covered by E9-1-1.

In most areas, phone number and location information is not yet available for 9-1-1 calls made from a cellular/wireless phone.

### When should you use 9-1-1?

9-1-1 is only to be used in emergency situations. An emergency is any situation that requires immediate assistance from the police/sheriff, the fire department or an ambulance. If you are ever in doubt of whether a situation is an emergency you should call 9-1-1. It's better to be safe and let the 9-1-1 operator determine if you need emergency assistance.

Do not call 9-1-1:

- For information
- For directory assistance
- When you are bored and just want to talk
- For paying for violation tickets
- For your pet
- As a prank (joke)

If you call 9-1-1 by mistake, do not hang up. Tell the call taker what happened so they know there really is not an emergency\*\*.

\*\*National Emergency Number Association (NENA), 2009, 4350 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 750, Arlington, VA, 2203-1695, 703-812-4600, [www.nena.org](http://www.nena.org)

### **What if the caller is Hard of Hearing?**

- In an emergency, dial 9-1-1 on your phone (through CapTel or amplified phone). It's a free call. If you are not at home, you can use any kind of phone: push button, rotary, cell/wireless, cordless, or pay phone. (With some pay phones, you may need coins to get a dial tone; with many cell/wireless phones, E9-1-1 does not yet work)
- If you use CapTel, you can dial 9-1-1 and automatically connect to 9-1-1 operator. The call will be treated as Voice Carry Over (VCO). The operator will hear your voice and the operator will answer back to you by typing their messages to your captioning screen.
- Stay calm and state your emergency
- Speak loudly and clearly. Give the 9-1-1 operator your name, phone number and the address where help is needed.
- Answer the operator's questions. Stay on the phone if it is safe to do so, and do not hang up until the operator tells you to.

### **What if a 9-1-1 caller is Deaf or speech impaired?**

Communications centers that answer 9-1-1 calls have special text telephones (TTY/TTD) for responding to 9-1-1 calls from Deaf or speech impaired callers.

- If a caller uses a TTY/TTD, the caller should:
- Stay calm, place the phone receiver in the TTY, dial 9-1-1
- After the call is answered, press the TTY keys several times. This may help shorten the time necessary to respond to the call.
- Give the operator time to connect their TTY. If necessary, press the TTY keys again. The 9-1-1 call taker should answer and type "GA" for Go Ahead.
- Tell what is needed-police, fire department, or ambulance. Give your name, phone number and the address where help is needed
- Stay on the telephone if it is safe. Answer the operator's questions.

If a Deaf, Hard of Hearing or speech impaired caller does not have a TTY/TTD but has an active phone line, the caller should pick up the phone and dial 9-1-1 and do not hang up. Not hanging up leaves a line open. With most 9-1-1 calls, the caller's address is displayed on the call taker's screen and help will be sent. Additionally, callers can use Video Relay Service (VRS) or IP relay to connect to 9-1-1:

- If a caller uses videophone (VP), the caller should:
- Stay calm, press 9-1-1 in the dial box on your VP or IP relay screen
- After you are connected to Video Relay Service or IP relay interpreter, your call will be connected to 9-1-1 operator. Your phone number and address should show up on the interpreter's and 9-1-1 operator's computer screen if you already registered with VRS or IP relay service providers.
- Tell what is needed-police, fire department, or ambulance. Still give your name, phone number and the address where help is needed. Stay with the interpreter and operator if it is safe. Answer the operator's questions.

## 9-1-1 Checklist

### 1. Calling 9-1-1 will work effectively if:

- You have working phone line at home including phone service (your local phone company).
- Wireless cell phone/pager with active wireless service provider (AT&T, T-Mobile, Verizon, Sprint or other wireless services).
- Using Video Relay Service (VRS), IP Relay or other relay services (example: 711) **if you are already registered (sign-up) with them** in order to have your contact information in their database. The VRS/IP interpreter or 711 (with TTY) and 9-1-1 dispatcher can see your address and phone number to help them locate you for quicker emergency assistance.
- You have working phone line at home and you can not speak, you can still call 9-1-1 you do not have to talk to them and do not hang up, leave the phone there until the emergency team arrive at your home.

### 2. Calling 9-1-1 may or may not work:

- You do not have working phone line at home. **Not all phone companies will have “Hot Dial Tone” to allow you to call 9-1-1 for an emergency without a phone line. You will need to contact your local phone company and make sure that you have a “Hot Dial Tone” to have access to 9-1-1!**
- You have current service with internet/cable service provider (Insight, Vonage, Comcast, Time Warner and other local broadband/cable services) **without** their phone service.
- You still can call 9-1-1 through VRS/IP or 711 relay (with TTY) **but if you have not registered (sign-up) with them to have your contact information entered into their database**, then it will take longer for the interpreter and the 9-1-1 operator to get your address to locate you. They will be asking for your address, phone number and what is your emergency. Contact your relay service provider for registration.
- You can use IP relay with your wireless pager but the relay interpreter and 9-1-1 dispatcher will not have your contact information and location. You have to tell them where you are and what is your emergency. This will help you to get assistance quicker.