



## ***Your Guide to Calling Wayne County/Richmond 9-1-1 Emergency Services***

To best respond to an emergency situation, call takers, dispatchers and first responders need your help. **Please familiarize yourself and those living or visiting your home with the following tips.** This will ensure that the 9-1-1 call is able to process your emergency call efficiently, providing help as quickly as possible.

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

#### **Only in an emergency!**

Please do not call for general information, directions, weather or other non-emergency information. Remember if you tie up 9-1-1 with non-emergency calls, you may be endangering someone else's life.

### What you should do when calling 9-1-1:

1. When calling 9-1-1, **speak clearly** and be prepared to provide the following:
  - **LOCATION** of the incident
  - **TELEPHONE NUMBER** you are calling from
  - **DESCRIPTION OF THE EMERGENCY** and what services are needed (police, fire, or ambulance)
2. **Give your exact location- a street address or intersection, including the town.** This information helps the 9-1-1 call taker send emergency response to the right location. If you are unsure of the location, look for landmarks, large buildings, street signs, or mile markers to determine your location.
3. **Do NOT hang up until the call taker ends the call.** If you are cut off, always call back and explain you were cut off.
4. **Give the call taker all the information they request.** It will help them help you.

### Calling 9-1-1 with your cell phone:

- **If driving, pull over**, if possible (this reduces the chance of a dropped call).
- Provide the 9-1-1 call taker with your **exact location and cell phone number**. Cell phone location technology is not always available or accurate.
- **Do not program 9-1-1 into your speed dial** or automatic call feature. Accidental calls from cell phones slow down response in 9-1-1 call centers and account for nearly one quarter of all 9-1-1 calls.
- Calling 9-1-1 from a cell phone is always free and it is never necessary to dial an area code.
- Disconnected cell phones can still call 9-1-1. Remove the battery if you are giving an old phone to a child to play with.

### Text messaging and sending cell phone photos to 9-1-1

Can you text 9-1-1 for emergency assistance in Wayne County? Yes you can! But there are some things you need to know. Verizon Wireless and T-Mobile customers in Wayne County should keep the following in mind concerning sending a text to 9-1-1:

Customers should use the texting option only when calling 9-1-1 is not an option. Communicating with 9-1-1 dispatchers by voice is more effective than text-to-911. Using text should be limited to the following circumstances:

- When calling 9-1-1 is not possible, such as if the caller is deaf, hearing or speech impaired.
- If a caller is otherwise unable to speak, because of a medical condition (such as a stroke, etc)
- If speaking would be unsafe, as in the case of abduction or home invasion
- ✧ Using a phone to call 9-1-1 is still the most efficient way to reach emergency help. Texting is not always instantaneous, which is critical during a life-threatening emergency. It may take slightly longer to dispatch emergency services in a text to 9-1-1 situation because of time involved: someone must enter the text, the message must go over the network and the 9-1-1 Telecommunicator must read the text and then text back.
- ✧ **Include your specific location and nature of the emergency in your first text message** to 9-1-1. Providing location information and nature of the emergency in the text message is imperative, since our Communication Center will receive only an approximate location of the cell phone, and will not be able to speak with the person sending the text.
- ✧ Text abbreviations or slang should never be used so that the intent of the dialogue can be as clear as possible.
- ✧ SMS911 should only be used to communicate between emergency help and the texter; with **NO PICTURES, VIDEO, OTHER ATTACHEMENTS**, or other recipients appended to the message.
- ✧ Customers must be in range of cell towers in the area. If customers are outside or near the edge of a county, the message may not reach the Wayne County Emergency Communications Center.
- ✧ Texts sent to 9-1-1 have the same 160-character limit as other text messages.
- ✧ Verizon Wireless customers who use Usage Controls should remove this feature to ensure full text to 9-1-1 capability.
- ✧ Verizon Wireless and T-Mobile customers must have mobile phones that are capable of sending text messages.
- ✧ The solution is currently available for customers who use the SMS provided by Verizon Wireless and T-Mobile. It is not available for third-party text messaging applications that can be downloaded to the phone or for applications that do not use SMS technology.
- ✧ The texting function should only be used for emergency situations that require an immediate response from police, fire, or emergency medical services. Non-emergency issues should still be communicated to the local municipalities' local communications centers through their non-emergency telephone lines (Our non-emergency number is 765-973-9355).

Want to know more about requesting emergency assistance by text message? Get our brochure What You Need To know Before You Text 9-1-1: <http://www.co.wayne.in.us/911/911TextTrifold.pdf>

Calling 9-1-1 via VoIP, WiFi network, or cordless phones:

- VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) is also known as IP telephony, Internet telephony, broadband phone, and voice over broadband
- Some cell phone service providers have introduced technology that enables the use of a cell phone account with any corded or cordless home phone via a specialized wireless router (WiFi Network)

- VoIP and WiFi Network customers should take the following safety measures:
  1. **Register the accurate physical address of your home when you sign up for the service.**
  2. **Have a clear understanding of the limitations to your service.** For example, many VoIP, WiFi Networks, and cordless phones will not work when there is a power outage or when the high speed connection or cable is down. Installing a backup power supply, maintaining a traditional phone line with a corded extension, or having a cell phone should be considered.
  3. Inform children, babysitters and visitors about your service and its 9-1-1 limitations.

**Promptly provide your VoIP or WiFi Network provider with changes to address information.**

What will happen when you dial 9-1-1?

- A 9-1-1 call taker receives your call
- The call taker will ask you for the location of the emergency. Provide your exact location or address.
- The call taker will then ask specific questions about the incident. Do your best to describe the emergency and answer all questions.
- Call information is radioed to the appropriate responders.
- Stay calm and listen. 9-1-1 call takers may give basic instructions about what to do until help arrives.

What you can do before an emergency occurs:

- Share these 9-1-1 tips with family, friends, babysitters, and neighbors
- **Post the address, and phone number** of your residence near the phone
- **Make sure your house is clearly marked with its correct street number and easy to see** from the street. Do not rely on curbside painted house numbers- they can be blocked by a parked car, snow, leaves, trash cans or any other type of obstruction.

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