

CALLING 911



What is 9-1-1?

9-1-1 is the number to call for all emergencies. If you need police, medics, or the fire department, in an emergency, 9-1-1 is the number to call. 9-1-1 is the dedicated phone line that will connect you to your local Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). A highly skilled and well-trained dispatcher will be the person you will speak with.

How do I dial 9-1-1?

During an emergency, dial 9-1-1 from any phone. 9-1-1 calls will go through to your local PSAP whether you're calling from a push button, cordless, cellular/wireless, rotary, or pay phone. Remember to remain calm and tell the dispatcher where emergency assistance is needed. Please remember to follow the dispatcher's instructions; we are here to help you.

When should I use 9-1-1?

9-1-1 is only to be used when an emergency has just happened, or when it is in progress. An emergency is defined as being any situation that requires an immediate "Code 3" type response from the medics, fire, or police department. In public safety, Code 3 means a response with lights and siren to a high priority situation. For example, any type of serious, or life threatening crime in progress, or injury vehicle collision, any type of serious medical situation, i.e. a heart attack, a serious injury to a person, or an unresponsive person. Remember; use your judgment and common sense when dialing 9-1-1. Please do not dial 9-1-1 if you do not have a real, LIFE OR DEATH or CRIME IN PROGRESS emergency.

When should I NOT use 9-1-1?

Please do not use 9-1-1 to ask what the number for the non-emergency line is. Do not call 9-1-1 for/to: report a crime that has occurred hours or days earlier, animal related calls (unless the animal is attacking a person), civil standbys, child custody disputes, non-injury vehicle collisions, suspicious persons or vehicles, verbal disputes/arguments, general information, as a prank, loud music, loud parties, directory assistance, or to speak with an officer.

What if I dial 9-1-1 on accident?

Do not feel bad, many people misdial 9-1-1. The most common reason dispatchers hear, "I meant to dial 4-1-1." If you misdial 9-1-1, do not hang up, stay on the phone with the dispatcher and let them know you misdialed. Do not disconnect until they tell you to do so. If you hang up, the dispatcher will attempt to call you back and check to determine if everything is okay.

What is Enhanced 9-1-1?

Enhanced 9-1-1 (E9-1-1) is the tool that dispatch centers use to determine where a 9-1-1 call is coming from. When you dial 9-1-1 from a land based phone line, the dispatcher's computer screen will display the address, phone number, and the name that the phone is under, as well as other information. Computer systems are not perfect, so the dispatcher will always confirm with

you where it is that you are calling from.



Why does the dispatcher ask so many questions?

The dispatcher does this to determine the severity and nature of each call we receive. It is our job to keep our officers as safe as we can, and not send them into harms way without knowing some information. You may feel that the dispatcher is being nosy, or asking too many questions, but that is our job, we are in the business of information. We also ask questions to determine the priority of the call and how we need to respond. Say for example we get a call of a fight. We need to know if it's a verbal dispute, or a physical fight, or a fight with weapons involved. A verbal dispute would get a different response as compared to a fight with weapons, which would generate a "Code 3" response from our officers. Also, it's important for our officer's safety to know if they might encounter a suspect who could be under the influence of drugs, or if the suspect might have a knife. We ask questions like, "which way did they leave," so our officers know where to look for a person. All of these questions are important, and it's even more important that you cooperate and answer them.

9-1-1 Prank calls

Prank calls are when someone dials 9-1-1 as a joke, or dials 9-1-1 and then hangs up when there is no need to dial 9-1-1. This is very dangerous; someone with a real emergency might not be able to get through. It is also against the law in the state of California to misuse 9-1-1. You can be charged with a misdemeanor if you make a 9-1-1 prank call. (California Penal Code 653x)

If I don't speak English, can you still help me?

Yes, we can help you. If you dial 9-1-1, or the non-emergency line, the dispatcher can conduct a three-way phone call with a translator that will assist them. If you can speak any English, please tell the dispatcher what language you speak so they can get the proper translator.



Remember, 9-1-1 is a vital tool that can assist public safety in an emergency. It is only to be used in an emergency.