

911 Emergency Service

The 9-1-1 Emergency Telephone Service

In an emergency situation where you require the assistance of the police, the fire department or an ambulance, 9-1-1 provides immediate access to all the emergency services.

Regardless of where you are calling from, when you dial 9-1-1 your call will be answered by special 9-1-1 operators at the 9-1-1 Regional Control Centre.

When you call 9-1-1, the system, in most cases, will automatically identify the number of the telephone that you are calling from, as well as the actual address of the phone and the name of the registered owner.

The 9-1-1 computer compiles your address and phone number before your call is connected to an operator. You will not hear anything during this time; be patient, it takes a couple of seconds for the computer to finish its process.

The 9-1-1 operator will ask you which service you require, "Police, Fire or Ambulance". If you're not sure which service you require, they will question you to determine the right one. You will then be immediately connected to the correct agency.

The call-taker at the requested agency will ask for your name, address, phone number and the nature of the emergency. This information is required in all emergency reports. Answer all questions as clearly as possible; if necessary, a vehicle may be dispatched as you are answering. Follow the dispatcher's instructions and stay on the phone until you are told to hang up. Try and stay calm.

If you do call 9-1-1, but can't speak or continue the call, help can still be sent to you. This problem is not uncommon; sometimes people are panicked or disoriented when they call in an emergency, or are in personal danger and cannot speak. The advantage of the automatic location identification in the "enhanced" system is that it accommodates this problem by providing the caller's location.

In most cases, the Automatic Location Identification will provide you name, address and phone number. The system also works for unlisted numbers and for pay phones. If you wish to anonymously report a crime which has already happened, you can call the Crime Stoppers number, which is 669-TIPS (669-8477). Anonymity is guaranteed on the Crime Stoppers line. You can call 9-1-1 from any phone. If you're at a pay phone, you don't need any money; just dial 9-1-1. You can also call 9-1-1 free if you are using a cellular phone.

Please don't call 9-1-1 just to see if it works. Your test call could cause delays in responding to real emergency calls. If you dial 9-1-1 by mistake, please stay on the line and let the operator know you've made a mistake. Otherwise the operator may assume you are in distress and

dispatch the emergency service unnecessarily. Do not program 9-1-1 into your programmable phone; it is too easy to accidentally call 9-1-1.

Calling 9-1-1 is usually faster than contacting your local emergency services directly. Calling 9-1-1 has the advantage of providing your name and address to call-takers at the emergency agencies. The Regional Control Centre transfers your 9-1-1 call immediately to your local agency where it is answered with the highest priority.

There are a few very important things you should do in order to be prepared should you ever have an emergency.

Post the 9-1-1 number next to your phone. Make sure everyone in the house – including your children, your babysitter or anyone else who is staying with you – knows the number and can see it when they reach for the phone.

Make sure your home is easy to locate. The police officers, firefighters, and ambulance attendants need to be able to find your home immediately. The address on the front of your house must be easy to read from the street. The numbers should not be blocked by trees or hidden in any way and should be well lit at night.

We hope you never have to call 9-1-1, but if you do have an emergency, 9-1-1 is the number to call.

Call 9-1-1 and help will come.

For more information on the enhanced 9-1-1 telephone service, contact your local police or fire department.