

**How does 9-1-1 work?**

When you dial 9-1-1 from anywhere in the state your call is routed to the proper police, fire or ambulance dispatch center for the location from which you are calling.

**Can you call 9-1-1 from a cell phone?**

Yes, but from a cellular phone, the 9-1-1 center answering your call will not know your exact location, so you must help them locate you. And, if you are calling from near a highway, your call may first be routed to the State Patrol.

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

Nine-one-one is only to be used in emergency situations. An emergency is any situation which requires immediate response from the police/sheriff, the fire department, or an ambulance. If you are ever in doubt, call 9-1-1. It's best to be safe and let the call taker determine if it's an emergency.

Do not call 9-1-1:

- for information
- for paying tickets
- for directory assistance
- for your pet
- when you're bored and
- as a prank
- just want to talk

If you call 9-1-1 by mistake, do not hang up. Tell the call taker what happened, so he/she knows that there is no emergency.

**How do you make a 9-1-1 call?**

In an emergency, call 9-1-1. It's a free call. You can use any kind of phone: push button, rotary, cellular, cordless or pay phone. (With some pay phones, you may need coins to get a dial tone).

- Stay calm and state your emergency.
- Speak loudly and clearly. Give the 9-1-1 call taker your name, phone number and the address where help is needed.
- Answer the call taker's questions. Stay on the telephone if it is safe to do so, and don't hang up until the call taker tells you to.

**What if a 9-1-1 caller doesn't speak English?**

Dispatchers can get a translator on the line within seconds once the language spoken is identified. It is important that non-English speaking callers attempt to relay the language spoken. A non-English speaking caller may hear a short conversation in English and some clicking sounds as an interpreter is added to the 9-1-1 call. Translators are available for 150 languages.

**Why does the 9-1-1 Operator ask so many questions during a 9-1-1 call?**

The 9-1-1 Operator is required to ask a variety of questions to find out what is happening and where it is happening. The information they get will help to classify the call and get responders to the correct location as quickly as possible. Remember that help can be sent while the operator is on the line with the caller.

Sources: Minneapolis Police Department; Ector County, Texas 9-1-1 Service