



Sumner County Emergency Communications TIPS FOR CALLING 9-1-1

The more you know what to expect when calling 9-1-1, the faster help can get there.

IS YOUR NUMBER UP?

Make sure your house or building number is posted conspicuously and free of unobstructed view.

If posting on your house or building, make sure the numbers are large enough to view from the street. Numbers should be painted in a color contrasting to that of the house. Place numbers where they will be visible by porch or night light.

If posting on your mail box, consider using a reflective numbering. If the mailbox is on the street, post numbers on both sides so they will be visible from any approach directions.



STAY CALM. While difficult, the calmer you are, the more clearly you will understand questions and provide answers.

DIAL 9-1-1...on the telephone. If calling from a business, know in advance whether or not you need to dial a number to access an outside line. If calling from a cell phone, do not forget to press "Send".

WATCH BACKGROUND NOISES. Televisions and radios, along with persons in the background screaming or yelling can hamper communications. If outside, be alert to noises made by wind, traffic, trains, etc.

STATE YOUR LOCATION. Know your location at all times as it may not show on the dispatcher's computer screen. A physical street address is best, but if it is unknown, give distance and directions from the nearest commonly known intersection or landmark. **The LOCATION is the single most important information needed...be precise.**

LISTEN CAREFULLY...ANSWER QUESTIONS. Dispatchers must obtain a lot of information so an appropriate response can be generated and for your safety and the safety of responders as well. Rest assured, help is not delayed...in emergencies, one dispatcher is sending help while the call taker is asking you questions. Answer all questions, regardless of how irrelevant they may seem.

DO NOT PUT YOURSELF IN DANGER. Answer the questions the best that you can, but do not put yourself in danger for the sake of obtaining information.

LISTEN TO INSTRUCTIONS. The dispatcher may give you instructions to stay safe until help arrives, or for medical emergencies, may instruct you on how to render aid until an ambulance arrives.

STAY ON THE LINE. Do not hangup until the dispatcher instructs you. In active situations, the dispatcher may keep you on the line until help arrives to monitor the scene and track the status of suspects.

IF YOU ACCIDENTALLY CALL 9-1-1, DO NOT HANGUP. Accidental calls happen, but procedure requires a law enforcement officer be dispatched to verify there is no emergency. Remaining on the line and explaining the situation *may* prevent an unnecessary response.



When should I call 9-1-1? *Anytime you need law enforcement, fire, emergency medical services, or emergency management to come to your location.*

Do Not Call...

- For road conditions. Instead, check the kandrive.org website.
- To check the status of warrants.
- To check to see if someone is in jail, or to check jail visiting hours. Instead, call the jail at 620-326-8943.
- For power outages, **unless** you have an electrically powered life sustaining appliance (e.g. oxygen generator, heart monitor, etc.). Call your power company to report power outages.
- During natural disasters, do not call 9-1-1 for advice on what to do or where to go. Plan for emergency sheltering *before* a disaster occurs.
- For civic information (e.g. parade times, swimming pool hours, etc).

Text-to-911



Text-to-911 is now available in Sumner County with plans from AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile, and Verizon Wireless.

Texting 911 should only be used when a voice call cannot be made.

Examples include;

- Deaf or hard of hearing callers, or individuals with a speech difficulty
- Callers unable to speak due to a medical conditions

- Situations that would put the caller in danger if a voice call were made (e.g. abductions, domestic violence, active shooter events, etc)

Provide the same information for text messages as you would a voice call, however;

- Use plain language; avoid abbreviations, symbols, emoticons, etc.
- Make messages as brief, but concise, as possible

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Avoiding Accidental Calls

Many accidental calls to 9-1-1 are placed inadvertently after someone places their phone in their pocket or purse. Most callers do not even realize they've called 9-1-1. To help avoid this, lock your cell phone keypad before placing your cell phone in your pocket, purse, or other enclosed area.



Children and Cell Phones

Most cell phones have the ability to call 9-1-1, even though they are inactive and no longer have an assigned cell phone provider. Before giving an old cell phone to a child to play with as a toy, please remove the battery so inadvertent calls to 9-1-1 are not placed. Inactive cell phones cannot be traced, and repeated nuisance calls to 9-1-1 may prevent someone with an actual emergency from getting help.

