



HELP PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATIONS HELP YOU: YOUR GUIDE TO CALLING 9-1-1 EMERGENCY SERVICES

To best respond to an emergency situation 9-1-1 call takers, dispatchers and first responders need your help. Familiarize yourself, and those living in or visiting your home, with the following tips to ensure that the 9-1-1 call taker will be able to process your emergency call efficiently and send assistance as quickly as possible.

9-1-1 NEEDS TO KNOW WHERE YOU ARE

- When calling 9-1-1, one of the first things you'll be asked to provide is the location of the emergency you're reporting.
- The call taker may not automatically know your location or may ask you to confirm it.
- Make sure you provide as much detail on your location as possible, such as landmarks, cross streets and mileposts.
- Be prepared for the 9-1-1 call taker to ask you to confirm that you are in Prince George's County.
- Stay calm.

KNOW HOW TO USE THE PHONE YOU OWN

- Before you need help in an emergency, be sure to understand how the type of phone you use affects your call to 9-1-1.
- It is important to know the capabilities of the device you are using (landline, cellular, VoIP).
- Do not give old phones to children as toys. A wireless phone with no active service can still call 9-1-1.
- Cell phones may not automatically tell 9-1-1 call takers where you are, so be prepared to provide detailed information about your location.
- The current 9-1-1 system is designed for voice communications only.
- Texting 9-1-1 is not an option in most locales; you must dial 9-1-1 and speak with a call taker.
- Pull over when driving, if possible. This reduces the chance of a dropped call.
- Don't put 9-1-1 on speed dial. Lock your keypad when you're not using your phone, so 9-1-1 isn't dialed by mistake.

9-1-1 IS FOR EMERGENCY USE ONLY

- Call 9-1-1 for emergencies only. It is appropriate to call 9-1-1 when you need to save a life, stop a crime or report a fire.
- 9-1-1 is the right number to call in an emergency when a prompt response is needed.
- If you are not sure you have an emergency to report, call 9-1-1 and let the call taker decide. The call taker will transfer you to the non-emergency dispatch number if necessary.

REMAIN CALM, BE PREPARED

- Try to stay calm, give information and follow all instructions.
- Professional call-takers are trained to get information from you. Listen carefully and answer as concisely as possible.
- Remember that even if the dispatcher is still asking questions or giving instructions, help is on the way.

HELP 9-1-1 HELP YOU

- Stay on the phone if you reach a recording.
- Answer all of the call takers questions. The questions do not delay the response of emergency personnel.
- Be a good witness. Remember all offender and vehicle descriptions
- Follow all instructions given by the call taker.
- Don't hang up until the call taker tells you to.
- If you accidentally call 9-1-1, stay on the line and tell the call taker that you do not have an emergency.

