

## Do's and Don'ts of 9-1-1

**When** the 9-1-1 number was inaugurated in Haleyville (Ala.) in 1968, it was intended as an easily-remembered, no-coin method of reaching the correct law enforcement, fire and EMS agencies. Today, officials estimate that over 291,000 calls are made to 9-1-1 each day in the United States. Locally, our 9-1-1 Center responds to an average of 250 9-1-1 calls each day.

**Our** 9-1-1 is an Enhanced system. In addition to providing three-digit dialing, no-coin needed from pay telephones and intelligent routing to the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP), an Enhanced 9-1-1 system adds the ability to display the caller's address and telephone number from landline telephones at the PSAP for the dispatcher's reference. Any cellular phone can call 9-1-1 for free, but not all cell phones provide the number and location to the dispatcher.

### **Do Call 911 in an Emergency.**

In general, 9-1-1 is an emergency number to obtain assistance for any police, fire or medical emergency incident.

**Do Dial** 9-1-1 only for an emergency. An emergency is any serious medical problem (chest pain, seizure, bleeding), any type of fire (business, car, building), or any life-threatening situation (fights, person with weapons, etc.). You can also use 9-1-1 to report crimes in progress, whether or not a life is threatened.

**Do Not** dial 9-1-1 for a non-emergency. Instead, dial the agency's listed 7-digit non-emergency telephone number. A non-emergency incident is one where life and property is not in danger such as theft of property or vandalism. You should also use the non-emergency telephone number for intoxicated persons who are not disorderly, or cars blocking the street or alley. Do not call 9-1-1 to report a power outage – call your electrical utility instead. 9-1-1 dispatchers cannot call a taxi for you – call the cab company directly.

**Do Not** program 9-1-1 into your auto-dial telephone. You won't forget the number, and programming the number invites accidental dialing of the number. Also, please do not dial 9-1-1 to “test” your phone or the system. This needlessly burdens the dispatchers and system with non-emergency calls.

**Do Not** hang up. If you dial 9-1-1 in error, do not hang up the telephone. Instead, stay on the line and explain to the dispatcher that you dialed by mistake and that you do not have an emergency. If you hang up, a dispatcher will call back to confirm that there is no emergency. If you don't answer, a police officer or deputy must be dispatched to confirm that you are OK. This will needlessly take resources away from genuine emergencies.

## If You Need to Call 9-1-1....

**Calls** to 9-1-1 calls are answered immediately by an available dispatcher. However, if all dispatchers are busy on other calls, you may have to wait for the next dispatcher. Stay on the line and your call will be answered. If you hang up and call back, your call will be delayed because you will be placed back at the end of the line of waiting calls.

**When** the dispatcher answers, briefly describe the type of incident you are reporting. For example, “I'm reporting an auto fire,” or “I'm reporting an unconscious person,” or “I'm reporting a shoplifter.” Then stay on the line with the dispatcher—do not hang up until the dispatcher tells you to. In some cases, the dispatcher will keep you on the line while the emergency units are responding to ask additional questions or to obtain on-going information.

**Let** the call-taker ask you questions—they have been trained to ask questions that will help prioritize the incident, locate it and speed an appropriate response. Your answers should be brief and responsive. Remain calm and speak clearly. If you are not in a position to give full answers to the call-taker (the suspect is nearby), stay on the phone and the dispatcher will ask you questions that can be answered “yes” or “no.”



**Dial  
9-1-1**

- **To stop a crime**
- **To report a fire**
- **To save a life**



For more information  
about our communications  
center, 9-1-1 or any of the  
services that we provide,  
feel free to contact us at:

(765) 973-9268

Or send an email to:

[driney@co.wayne.in.us](mailto:driney@co.wayne.in.us)

[www.co.wayne.in.us/911/index.html](http://www.co.wayne.in.us/911/index.html)

Wayne County Emergency  
Communications Center  
Non-Emergency Number:

(765) 973-9355



Non-Emergency Numbers for  
Our Partner Agencies:

Sheriff: (765) 973-9393

Jail: (765) 973-9397

Richmond Police: (765) 983-7247

Richmond Fire: (765) 983-7266

Wayne Co. EMA: (765) 973-9399

Need Information and Referral  
for local community human  
services or health services?

**Call 2-1-1**

*Wayne County  
Emergency  
Communications*

**9 - 1 - 1**

**The Do's  
and  
Don'ts**

of

**Our Emergency  
Telephone Number**