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9-1-1 Know Your Location

What does “What’s Your Location” mean?

It’s important that you know how to help 9-1-1 help you. In an emergency, seconds matter, so knowing where you are and being prepared to answer that question can make all the difference. Here’s what you can do:

What information is needed when you call 9-1-1 for help?

1. Your Location
2. Phone Number
3. Type of Emergency
4. Name of those involved

Remember 9-1-1 may not know your location.

It is important for cell phone users calling 9-1-1 to remember some basic ABC’s:

- A. **ALWAYS BE AWARE OF YOUR SURROUNDINGS:** Tell the 9-1-1 center the location of the emergency; provide landmarks such as cross streets & mileposts.
- B. **BE PREPARED:** Memorize your cell phone number so it can be readily given to the 9-1-1 center when asked.
- C. **STAY CONNECTED:** Do not hang up until told to do so. If you should get disconnected, call 9-1-1 back.

Know WHEN to call 9-1-1. 9-1-1 is for emergencies only. You should only be dialing 9-1-1 if someone is hurt or in danger, or if you are in immediate need of police, fire or medical assistance.

Know WHEN NOT to call 9-1-1. Don’t call 9-1-1 just because you burned dinner and your guests are arriving any minute, or because you are late for a meeting & need help finding an address. Inappropriate use of the 9-1-1 system wastes resources and ties up the lines at the call center. No one wants to be on hold when they are in the middle of a real crisis.

Know where you are. This is probably the most important information you can provide as a 9-1-1 caller, so try to be aware of your surroundings. Make a real effort to be as detailed as possible. If you are outside & don’t know the street address, take a look around & try to find landmarks or cross streets.

Stay calm. When you are on the phone with 9-1-1, you are their eyes & ears. Even though you may want to, try not to panic. If you are crying or yelling, it can be hard for the 9-1-1 operator to understand you. Stay strong, pull yourself together & answer all of the 9-1-1 operator’s questions.

Never hang up. You may have called 9-1-1 by accident, or your situation may have resolved itself, but it is important to let the 9-1-1 operator know this. If you end the call abruptly, the folks at the 9-1-1 center are going to assume that something has gone very wrong & will either call you back or send help anyway. Keep in mind that the call taker can dispatch responders to your location without disconnecting from the call, so until you are instructed to do otherwise, make sure to hold the line so that you can provide necessary information or assistance to the 9-1-1 operator.

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