

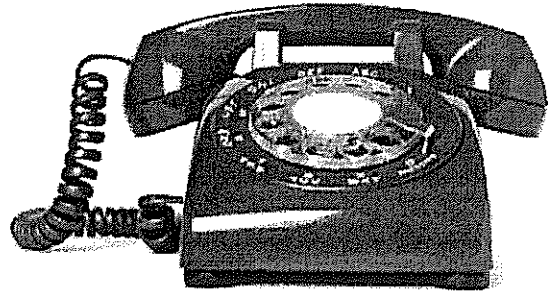
## Tips for Calling Emergency Services

### When should I call Emergency Services (police, fire or ambulance)?

Call only in the in case of emergencies where an **immediate response** is required.

#### What constitutes an emergency?

- When someone's life is in danger, a life threatening situation where every second counts
- When a crime is in progress ie: a fight, a theft, a break and enter, a prowler, a suspect is damaging someone's property
- When there has been a motor vehicle accident, with injuries



These are only some examples of when to call 9-1-1. There may be circumstances that differ from the examples given, but remember, if it is happening now and you see it taking place, then call 9-1-1.

### If you need to call for Emergency Assistance...

- **DO** always pay attention to your location. Emergency operators will need to know where you are so they can dispatch the help you need. If you don't know the exact address an intersection, hwy exit sign, cross street or landmark will assist the police in getting to your location faster.
- **DO** let the trained operator take control of the conversation and get all the necessary information. A 9-1-1 operator is trained to work through the questions in a systematic order, so the questions may seem very quick or rapid fire. But, this is the only way to gather the information as quickly as possible so a police person can be safely dispatched. Often the person taking the call has already alerted the dispatcher of the initial incident and is trying to gain further information to assist the police and you.

**Answer all the questions...** It can be frustrating because some of the questions seem irrelevant, however the faster you answer the faster help will arrive. ex: date of birth - this is needed to ensure the integrity of the records data base system - it ensures you are not mistaken for another person with the same name, it is a unique identifier.

**Stay calm...** callers are often hysterical, screaming or distracted by others around them, this hinders the operators ability to get the necessary information. Speak clearly and give the operator as much detail as possible.

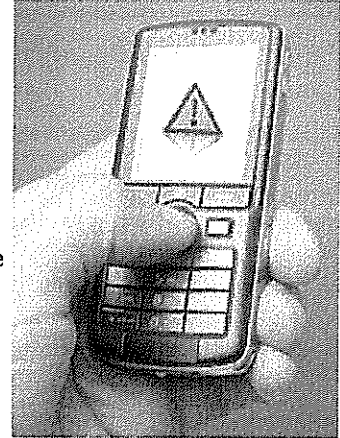
- **DO NOT** use text messaging as a method to call 911 for emergency services assistance. Text messaging does not allow our operators to ask questions and understand the urgency of the public's need. They will need to get full and accurate details of events and complaints. For the hearing impaired community, the best method for communicating with 9-1-1 remains the TTY format. More...
- **DO** remain where you are unless you are in danger. ie: domestic, fight etc.
- **DO NOT** program 9-1-1 into any telephone, this may lead to accidental calls.

**If you call 9-1-1 by mistake, DO NOT hang up the phone...** public safety policy dictates the operator to call back to confirm there is no emergency. This wastes valuable time. Simply apologize and tell the operator you called by accident and there is no emergency.

- **DO** call anyway if you are not sure if your call constitutes an 9-1-1 emergency. It is better to err on the side of safety.

## RCMP Cautions Against Using Text Messaging for Emergencies

The RCMP is asking the public **not to utilize text messaging as a method to call 911 for emergency services assistance**. These emergency services include police, fire or ambulance. We further request that text messaging not be used to communicate non-emergency or emergency RCMP assistance needs to the 10 digit RCMP detachment telephone numbers.



In order to ensure the safety of the public is first and foremost, it is necessary for the public to understand that text messaging does not afford our communications operators the opportunity to have a meaningful and comprehensive dialogue with the public. 911 and the RCMP communications operators must be able to fully understand the urgency of the public's need, and obtain full and accurate details of events and complaints.

Recognizing that some of the hearing impaired community has embraced text messaging, they too must know that the best method for communicating with 9-1-1 remains the TTY format. We empathize as text messaging has provided a sense of communication mobility, but unfortunately for this sector of our community the only dependable communication to request 9-1-1 is the TTY.

In some cases a text message appears to the caller as having been received in RCMP communications centres and with 9-1-1. This is not the case. A false sense of security may be experienced because a return message stating that your text message is undeliverable is not received.

Should the public wish to understand the proper use of 9-1-1, consult your 9-1-1 Service Provider website or phone the non-emergency telephone number for your local police, fire or ambulance.

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