Important Tips About Calling 9-1-1

Kansas City
Regional 9-1-1 System
Mid-America Regional Council
600 Broadway, Suite 200 • Kansas City, MO 64105-1659
816/474-4240 • www.marc.org/publicsafety
The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) serves as the coordinating agency for the Kansas City Regional 9-1-1 System, which handles more than 1.6 million emergency calls each year.

The regional system is coordinated through a number of committees and task forces comprised of representatives of local governments. The system is served by 41 public safety answering points (PSAPs) operated by government agencies in the nine-county bistate region.

### Public Safety Answering Points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AMR Ambulance Service</th>
<th>Leawood Police Dept.</th>
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<td>Belton Police Dept.</td>
<td>Lee’s Summit Fire Dept.</td>
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<td>Blue Springs Police Dept.</td>
<td>Lee’s Summit Police Dept.</td>
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<td>Cass County Sheriff’s Office</td>
<td>Lenexa Police Dept.</td>
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<td>Clay County Sheriff’s Office</td>
<td>Liberty Police Dept.</td>
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<td>Excelsior Springs Police Dept.</td>
<td>Miami County Sheriff’s Office</td>
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<td>Ft. Leavenworth Provost Marshal</td>
<td>North Kansas City Police Dept.</td>
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<td>Gladstone Dept. of Public Safety</td>
<td>Overland Park Police Dept.</td>
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<td>Grandview Police Dept.</td>
<td>Platte County Sheriff’s Office</td>
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<td>Harrisonville Police Dept.</td>
<td>Pleasant Hill Police Dept.</td>
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<td>Independence Police Dept.</td>
<td>Pleasant Valley Police Dept.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jackson County Sheriff’s Office</td>
<td>Prairie Village Police Dept.</td>
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<td>Johnson County Emergency Communications Center</td>
<td>Ray County 9-1-1</td>
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<td>Johnson County Sheriff’s Office</td>
<td>Raymore Police Dept.</td>
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<td>Kansas City, Missouri Fire/EMS Dept.</td>
<td>Raytown Police Dept.</td>
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<td>Kansas City, Missouri Police Dept.</td>
<td>Riverside Police Dept.</td>
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<td>Leavenworth County Sheriff’s Office</td>
<td>Shawnee Police Dept.</td>
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<td>Leavenworth Police Dept.</td>
<td>Sugar Creek Police Dept.</td>
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<td>Unified Government of Wyandotte County/Kansas City, Kansas</td>
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The major benefit of 9-1-1 to citizens and public safety agencies is the amount of time saved by the use of a common emergency phone number. In most cases, 9-1-1 personnel receive the phone number and location from which a call is made, saving valuable time that is crucial to successful emergency service.

It is important to keep your address, phone number and other emergency information by every phone. This brochure provides space on the back for vital information and is designed so you can keep one by each phone.
When should I call 9-1-1?

- To report a crime in progress.
- To report a fire.
- To save a life.
- Anytime an emergency response is required by law enforcement, fire or emergency personnel.

You should call 9-1-1 anytime you believe there is an actual emergency. If you are unsure, call 9-1-1 and the dispatcher will make the final determination.

Situations that are NOT 9-1-1 emergencies:
Please do not call 9-1-1 to report that electricity or other utilities are off; to notify authorities of traffic jams; to inquire about government services or to learn general information. Consult your local phone directory for the appropriate numbers.

Remember:
If the 9-1-1 system receives multiple calls at the same time, these calls will be answered in the order they are received and handled on a priority basis. Please be patient if your call is put on hold.
DO NOT HANG UP!

Remember:
When using a phone at a business or public building it may be necessary to obtain an outside line before dialing out. For example, you may have to dial an access code such as 9, 8 or 2 before dialing 9-1-1.
How will my call be handled by the 9-1-1 dispatcher?

When you call 9-1-1 to report an emergency, the dispatcher will ask you five basic questions . . .

- Where is this happening?
- What is happening now? Why?
- Who is involved? Descriptions?
- When did this happen?
- Is anyone injured?

Other information you may need:
Include the exact location or address of the emergency. Provide nearby intersections, landmarks, building name, floor, room or apartment number, as well as directions to the address, if possible. As soon as the dispatcher has determined your location and type of emergency, he or she will send help immediately. However, the dispatcher may keep asking you questions to gather information about the situation to pass along to the emergency personnel on the way to the scene. Don’t hang up until the dispatcher instructs you to do so.

I accidentally dialed 9-1-1. What should I do?

If you dialed 9-1-1 by mistake, stay on the line and tell the dispatcher that you have misdialed. If you hang up before talking to a dispatcher, the call will still be delivered to the 9-1-1 center. Valuable time may be lost for other callers while the dispatcher is trying to verify that there is no emergency at your location.
What do I need to know to give a good description?

In many 9-1-1 emergencies, the dispatcher will ask you to describe either the people or the vehicles involved in the emergency.

• **When describing an individual, start at the top of the head and work your way down.**
  - What was the race and sex of the individual?
  - How tall was the individual?
  - What was the hair color?
  - What was the individual wearing? (Start from the top of the head and go down.)
  - Did the individual have a mustache, beard, accent, limp, glasses or anything unusual that might make him or her stand out?

• **When describing a vehicle, the dispatcher will ask for the following information:**
  - Color.
  - Year of vehicle.
  - Make of vehicle.
  - Body style.
  - Additional description.
  - License plate (number and state) of the vehicle.

If you don’t know any of the above information, a general description of the vehicle will help. Example: A large, dark, older vehicle.
What should I teach my child about calling 9-1-1?

While many children are familiar with dialing 9-1-1 in an emergency situation, they often do not know other important information, such as their address or how to reach a parent at work. Experts recommend that you begin teaching your children this important information at about age three:

- Their full names, parents’ full names, home address and phone number with area code.
- Your cell phone number.
- The name and phone number of your employer.
- What an emergency is and when to call 9-1-1.
- How to hold the phone properly so that they can speak clearly into the phone.
- That it is against the law to call 9-1-1 as a joke or prank.
- Not to be afraid to call 9-1-1.

Teaching your children to call you at work before calling 9-1-1 wastes valuable time. Give them permission to call 9-1-1 if they think there is an emergency.

Remember:

Attempt to stay calm when you are talking to a 9-1-1 dispatcher. Take a deep breath. Listen to and answer each question. Do not hang up after dialing 9-1-1 until the dispatcher tells you to do so (even if you did not mean to dial 9-1-1).
Scenarios when it would be best to call 9-1-1

- To report a crime in progress.
- To report a fire.
- To save a life.
- Anytime an emergency response is required by law enforcement, fire or emergency medical personnel.
- **Remember, calling 9-1-1 is preferred.** Providing essential information to a 9-1-1 calltaker is much faster by voice than text. Texting is not always instantaneous.

Things to remember when sending a text to 9-1-1

- Include your exact location and the nature of your emergency.
- Use clear, simple language. Abbreviations and slang may create more confusion and delay response time.
- Silence the ringtone on your phone if the noise may compromise your safety. If you stop responding to text messages from the 9-1-1 center, the dispatcher may need to call to check on your safety.
- Do not text and drive. Not only is this dangerous, but it is illegal in most states. Please pull over to a safe location and stop your car prior to sending a text to 9-1-1.
- Do not copy other people on a text sent to 9-1-1.
- Send texts to 911. No dashes needed.
- Don’t attach pictures or videos to a text message to 9-1-1.
- If you are in an area where text to 9-1-1 service is not available, you will get a “bounce back” message telling you to make a voice call.
- Texts sent to 9-1-1 have a 160-character limit, just like other text messages.
When texting 9-1-1 might be better than calling

- If you are deaf or hard of hearing.
- If you are unable, for medical reasons, to speak into the phone.
- If your safety would be compromised if you spoke out loud — for example, during a home invasion or abduction.
- If your cell signal isn’t strong enough for a voice call to go through.

Text to 9-1-1 should ONLY be used in an emergency and in circumstances when you cannot safely call 9-1-1.

Text to 9-1-1 service is available in the Greater Kansas City metro, which includes Cass, Clay, Jackson, Platte and Ray counties in Missouri, and Johnson, Leavenworth, Miami and Wyandotte counties in Kansas. All four major cell phone companies, including AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile and Verizon, offer this service to their wireless customers.

Call if you can...text if you can’t.
Yes! It is very important that you provide as much information as possible to the dispatcher. This includes:

- Your wireless phone number.
- Location of the emergency.
- The name of the road you are traveling on, direction you are headed and any physical landmarks.
- How many miles from or to the nearest town or cross street.

Technology in use in the Kansas City region allows dispatchers to receive the phone number and approximate location from where the wireless 9-1-1 call originated. But it is still important to know your exact location in the event of an emergency. Make it a habit to note mile markers and other road signs that would help you identify where you are should you need to call 9-1-1.

How does the 9-1-1 center know my location?

9-1-1 calls in the MARC region go through a special router that uses x,y coordinates to provide the caller’s location on a map. This allows the 9-1-1 dispatcher to relay accurate location information to the appropriate agencies.

Complete location information may not always be available to the 9-1-1 dispatcher, so be prepared to provide this information when your call is answered.
Once implemented, Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) will allow you to transmit text, images, video and other data to the 9-1-1 call center. With NG9-1-1, dispatchers will be able to transfer calls, messages and data to other 9-1-1 call centers anywhere in the country, and be able to directly activate alternate routing much more quickly.

How do Internet Phone services work with 9-1-1?

Several companies offer phone services that allow people to use ordinary telephones to make calls through the Internet. This type of service, called Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), can cost significantly less than traditional phone services. VoIP often looks and works just like a regular phone. The difference is in how your voice is transported. Since 2005, Internet phone companies have been required to offer Enhanced 9-1-1 — the technology that provides dispatchers with your phone number and location — to their customers.

Nearly all VoIP providers serving the Kansas City metro area are connected to the Regional 9-1-1 System, but there may be some service providers that are not yet connected. If you use VoIP, find out if your service provider is connected the Regional 9-1-1 system. If not, your call may be routed to an incorrect dispatch center with no location or call-back information. Even if the call is routed correctly, the dispatcher may not receive your call back number or location information from the VoIP provider. It is important for you to be able to provide your number and location to the dispatcher if needed.

What is Next Generation 9-1-1?

Once implemented, Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) will allow you to transmit text, images, video and other data to the 9-1-1 call center. With NG9-1-1, dispatchers will be able to transfer calls, messages and data to other 9-1-1 call centers anywhere in the country, and be able to directly activate alternate routing much more quickly.
What should I do in case of a fire?

• GET OUT SAFELY
  Test doors with the back of your hand before opening them. If they are warm, use an alternate escape route. Crawl on your hands and knees low under smoke. Keep your head one to two feet above the ground. If your clothing catches on fire, remember STOP, DROP and ROLL.

• GET OUT AND STAY OUT
  Never go back inside a burning building. Do not try to rescue pets or possessions.

• GET HELP
  Call 9-1-1 from a different location after you have escaped.

• REMEMBER YOUR ESCAPE PLAN
  Go to a designated safe meeting place and wait for the fire department. Count heads and be prepared to advise firefighters if anyone is trapped inside.

Remember:

Fire survival begins long before a fire ever starts. Be sure you have a working smoke alarm with fresh batteries installed. You and your family should create and practice an escape plan so you will be ready to react immediately at the first sign of a fire.
Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, deadly gas created by home appliances, furnaces, ranges, dryers, heaters and other items that burn fuel. Symptoms of CO poisoning include headache, fatigue, nausea, dizzy spells, confusion and irritability. In case of a CO alarm or suspicion of CO poisoning:

- **GET OUT**
  Do not open windows or doors. Leave them closed so that an accurate reading can be obtained.
- **GET HELP**
  Call 9-1-1 or your local fire department.
- **STAY OUT**
  Do not re-enter the premises until you are told that it is safe to do so.

### What about carbon monoxide?

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless, deadly gas created by home appliances, furnaces, ranges, dryers, heaters and other items that burn fuel. Symptoms of CO poisoning include headache, fatigue, nausea, dizzy spells, confusion and irritability. In case of a CO alarm or suspicion of CO poisoning:

- **GET OUT**
  Do not open windows or doors. Leave them closed so that an accurate reading can be obtained.
- **GET HELP**
  Call 9-1-1 or your local fire department.
- **STAY OUT**
  Do not re-enter the premises until you are told that it is safe to do so.
**Can I call 9-1-1 if I use a TTY?**

Yes. All Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs) in the Kansas City Regional 9-1-1 System are equipped with TTY (text telephone) equipment. Communications professionals receive extensive training in handling emergency situations using this equipment.

**Can someone who does not speak English call 9-1-1?**

Yes. All PSAPs in the Kansas City Regional 9-1-1 System subscribe to the Language Line, which provides access to interpreters who speak more than 140 languages. The Language Line maintains a 24-hour communications center. Even when a 9-1-1 call comes from a non-English speaking individual, help is only minutes away.

**Will I receive medical information when I call 9-1-1?**

The information that you will receive when dialing 9-1-1 varies depending on your location and the type of emergency. In all cases, dial 9-1-1 for medical emergencies that require an ambulance.

Be prepared for an emergency by learning CPR and other life-saving techniques. Contact your local fire department, emergency medical service department, American Red Cross or the American Heart Association for more information.
Should I call 9-1-1 when my utilities stop working?

No. You need to contact your individual utility companies, who provide phone, gas, water and electric services to your home. The 9-1-1 dispatcher CANNOT help you when these utilities stop working.

WRITE DOWN THESE IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Electric Company: ________________________________

Water Company: ________________________________

Gas Company: ________________________________

Phone Company: ________________________________

Other: ________________________________

These numbers can be found on your utility bills.

Notes:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
# VITAL INFORMATION

**HOME ADDRESS:** __________________________________________

____________________________________________________________

**HOME PHONE:** ( )________________________________________

**NAMES OF ALL HOUSEHOLD OCCUPANTS:** ____________

____________________________________________________________

## PERSONAL EMERGENCY CONTACTS

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PERSONAL INFORMATION

NAME: ________________________________

EMPLOYER: ________________________________

WORK ADDRESS: ________________________________

WORK PHONE: ________________________________

MOBILE PHONE: ________________________________

HEALTH INSURANCE: ________________________________

POLICY NUMBER: ________________________________

PHYSICIAN NAME: ________________________________

PHYSICIAN PHONE: ________________________________

BLOOD TYPE: ________________________________

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS, ALLERGIES, MEDICATIONS OR OTHER MEDICAL PROBLEMS OR HISTORY:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
NON-EMERGENCY CONTACTS

POLICE DEPARTMENT
ADDRESS: _________________________________
PHONE: (   ) _______________________________

FIRE DEPARTMENT
ADDRESS: _________________________________
PHONE: (   ) _______________________________

CITY HALL
ADDRESS: _________________________________
PHONE: (   ) _______________________________

OTHER
ADDRESS: _________________________________
PHONE: (   ) _______________________________

American Red Cross
PHONE: (816) 931-8400

American Heart Association
PHONE: (913) 648-6727

Poison Control
PHONE: (800) 222-1222