



## IMPORTANT TIPS ABOUT CALLING 9-1-1

By: KANSAS CITY REGIONAL 9-1-1 SYSTEM

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### When should I call 9-1-1?

- **To Stop A Crime**
- **To Report A Fire**
- **To Save A Life**
- **Anytime An Emergency Response Is Required By Law Enforcement, Fire Or Emergency Medical 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.

### **Remember:**

If the 9-1-1 system receives multiple calls at the same time, these calls will be handled on a priority basis with the most serious emergencies being handled first. Please be patient if your call is put on hold. **DO NOT HANG UP!**

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## 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?
- When did this happen?
- What is happening now? Why?
- Who is involved?
- How can we help?

### Other Information You May Need

Include the exact location or address of the emergency and a clear description of exactly what is happening. When giving locations include nearby intersections, landmarks, building name, floor, room or apartment number, as well as directions to the address, if possible.

#### **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).

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## 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 subject?
- How tall was the subject?
- What was the hair color?
- What was the subject wearing? (Start from the top of the head and go down.)
- Did the subject have a moustache, beard, accent, limp, glasses or anything unusual that might make the subject 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 on 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.

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### **Does it make a difference if I call 9-1-1 on a cellular phone?**

**Yes!** When you make a 9-1-1 call from your wireless/cellular phone, dispatchers DO NOT receive the phone number and address from where the call originated.

When you make a 9-1-1 call from a cellular phone keep in mind that you need to know . . .

- Your cellular phone number

If you provide your cellular phone number to the 9-1-1 dispatcher, the dispatcher will be able to reach you in case the call is disconnected, which often happens with cellular calls.

- A good description of your surroundings

It is a good idea to always know the name of the road you are traveling on, which direction you are headed and how many miles you are from the nearest town or the nearest cross street.

#### **Remember:**

Many people do not have their cellular phone number memorized. Make sure that you have the number written down in an easy to find location before you need to call 9-1-1.

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### **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. Here is some of the most important information children need to know about calling 9-1-1:

- Teach your children their names, their parents names, their home address and phone number.
- Teach your children the name of your employer and phone number.
- Teach your children what an emergency is and when to call 9-1-1.
- Teach your children how to hold the phone properly so that they can speak clearly to the dispatcher.

- Teach your children that it is against the law to call 9-1-1 as a joke or prank.
  - Teach your children not to be afraid to call 9-1-1 if there is any doubt as to whether they should.
  - 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.
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## **What should I do in case of a fire?**

- **GET OUT SAFELY**

Test doors before opening them. If they are warm, use an alternate escape route. Crawl on your hands and knees low under smoke. Keep your head 12 to 24 inches above the floor. 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 the designated 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 smoke detectors installed with fresh batteries. You also need an escape plan that has been practiced and you must react immediately at the first sign of a fire.

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## **What should I do in case of a natural gas leak?**

- GET OUT
- GET HELP

Contact 9-1-1 or your local fire department if you suspect that you have a natural gas leak in or near your home.

- STAY OUT

Do not re-enter the premises until you are told that it is safe to do so.

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## **What are the dangers of carbon monoxide?**

Carbon monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless deadly gas created by home appliances, furnances, ranges, dryers, heaters and other items that burn fuel. Symptoms of CO poisoning include headache, fatigue, nausea, dizzy spells, confusion and irritability. Increased exposure can lead to vomiting, loss of consciousness, brain damage and death. 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

Contact 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.

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## **Can I call 9-1-1 if I use a T.D.D.?**

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

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

Yes. All Public Safety Answering Points 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 receiving a 9-1-1 call from a non-English speaking individual, help is only minutes away.

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

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

It is recommended that you know CPR and other life-saving techniques. Contact your local fire department or the American Red Cross for more information.

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## **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 CAN NOT help you when these utilities stop working.

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## **WRITE DOWN THESE IMPORTANT NUMBERS**

- Electric Company
- Water Company
- Gas Company
- Phone Company
- Other

These numbers can also be found on your utility bills.

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## **You should also write down the following information:**

### **VITAL INFORMATION**

- HOME ADDRESS
- HOME PHONE
- NAMES OF ALL HOUSEHOLD OCCUPANTS

## PERSONAL EMERGENCY CONTACTS

- NAME
- ADDRESS
- PHONE
- RELATIONSHIP

## PERSONAL INFORMATION

- NAME
- EMPLOYER
- WORK ADDRESS
- WORK PHONE
- CELLULAR PHONE
- PAGER
- 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
- CITY HALL  
ADDRESS  
PHONE