

All You Need to Know about Calling 911

Most people have a need, at some time in their life, to call 911. The City of Salina Emergency Communications Center receives over 7,000 calls to 911 each year. It is extremely important that all citizens are familiar with this lifesaving resource.

If you call 911 by mistake, please do not hang up. Explain to the 911 operator that the call was made by mistake and that there really isn't an emergency. If you hang up, police officers will immediately be dispatched to the location of the call to conduct a welfare check.

What is 911?

It is the number most people in the United States call to get help in a police, fire or medical emergency.

When Should You Use 911?

Only use 911 in emergency situations. An emergency is any situation that requires immediate assistance from law enforcement, the fire department or an ambulance. If you are ever in doubt as to whether a situation is an emergency, you should call 911. It is better to be safe and let the 911 call taker determine if you need emergency assistance.

If you call 911 by mistake, do not hang up. Explain to the call taker that the 911 call was made by mistake and that there really isn't an emergency. Be sure everyone in your household knows the address, as well as when and how to call 911.

"Land Line" Calling

When you dial 911 from a traditional phone or "land line," a dispatcher views a screen that provides:

- the phone number you're calling from
- the name associated with the phone line
- the address you're calling from

The dispatchers will ask you to verify the information so that they can send help to the correct location. If you are calling from a multi-line

phone system (usually found in office buildings), it may be difficult for dispatchers to determine your location.

Wireless Calling

When you dial 911 from a wireless or cell phone, the dispatchers view a screen that provides:

- the cell phone number
- the address of the cell site that your phone accessed

Note that when you call from a cell phone, the dispatcher does not receive your location. The system provides the location of the tower your phone is using. The dispatcher will ask you to assist them in pinpointing your location.

More on Wireless Calling

Cell phones are convenient and can be very useful if an emergency situation arises. However, for all that they help; cell phones also come with complications.

If your wireless phone is not "initialized," (you do not have a contract for service with a wireless service provider), and your emergency call gets disconnected, you must call the emergency operator back because the dispatch center will not have your telephone number and cannot contact you.

Unintentional wireless 911 calls happen frequently and can cause problems for emergency services dispatchers. Refrain from programming your phone to automatically dial 911 at the touch of a button. Lock your keypad when you're not using your wireless phone, and help keep the 911 lines open for real emergencies...

What is TDD/TTY?

TDD is the acronym for **T**elecommunication **D**evice for the **D**eaf. **TTY** is the acronym for **T**ele-**T**ypewriter. It is a device with a keyboard input and printer or display output used by the hearing and speech impaired.

The device contains a modem and is used over a standard analog phone line. Any citizen with a hearing impairment can use a TDD/TTY

device to communication with the Salina Emergency Communications Center.

Every 911 Operator at the City of Salina Emergency Communications Center has been trained on the proper use of a TDD/TTY. Our dispatchers conduct periodic tests to ensure that not only are the machines working, but that they know how to answer and place TDD/TTY calls. There is never any need to dial a separate number for TTD/TTY calls or to place these calls through a relay service. If you need help, just dial 911. Your call will be placed on the TDD/TTY and handled just like a call from someone without communication impairment.