



# DOs AND DON'Ts OF CALLING 911

**DON'T** – Tell a dispatcher to “hurry up...it's an emergency”, they know that already.

**DON'T** – Program 911 into an auto-dial telephone, it may result in accidental dialing of 911.

**DON'T** – Use 911 to contact friends or family during or after a natural disaster.

**DON'T** – Hang up the phone if 911 was dialed in error. Instead stay on the phone and explain to the dispatcher that it was a mistake.

**DON'T** – Hang up and try to call back if a recording is received or the call is put on hold. Instead stay on the phone and the call will be answered in the order of priority or in the order it was received.

**DON'T** – Call back to request an estimated time of arrival for the emergency units...They realize that it is an emergency and are responding as quickly and safely as possible from the location they were previously at, which may not be in close proximity to your location.

**DO** – Make sure you know your phone number or the phone number that you can be contacted and advise the dispatcher in case the call gets disconnected or they need to contact you for additional information prior to the emergency units arriving on location.

**DO** – Be patient with the dispatchers when they are obtaining information. Most likely, the emergency units are being dispatched while the caller is still on the phone with the dispatcher.

**DO** – Make a single test call from your local area to check the ANI/ALI information and to check if the phone is Phase 1 or Phase 2 capable. Tell the dispatcher that it is a test call and request the information needed.

**DO** - Dial 911 only for an emergency and use a non-emergency phone number for all other routine calls.

**DO** – Briefly describe the nature of the emergency. “I’m reporting \_\_\_\_\_.” If it’s safe to do so, stay on the line with the dispatcher; do not hang up until the dispatcher advises to do so.

**DO** – Stay on the phone line if the call is being transferred. A law enforcement dispatcher may answer the phone for a fire call and need to transfer the caller to the fire dispatcher.

**DO** – Let the dispatcher ask the questions, they have been specially trained to do so in order to prioritize the emergency and obtain vital information.

**DO** – Be prepared to describe the location you are calling from or the location of the emergency.