

"The **9-1-1** industry is facing its biggest challenge since turning up service in the early 1990's. Consumers are taking advantage of an explosion of new communications technologies in record numbers. These consumers need to understand how these technologies work with **9-1-1**, so that they can make an informed decision, before they have an emergency situation."

Christy Williams,
National Emergency
Number Association
Public Education Chair

When calling
9-1-1,
always be
prepared to
provide your
phone number
and the
exact location
of your
emergency!

Take
these **TIPS**
with you...
when calling
9-1-1



Discontinuing Your Traditional Phone Service

Many people are making the decision to disconnect their home phone, and move their home telephone to their cell phone. If you decide to use only a cell phone, keep these important tips in mind:

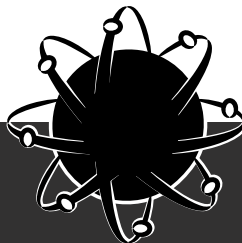
- A typical home or work phone gives **9-1-1** calltakers an exact location. Cell phones with location technology provides an approximate location.
- Cellular location technology is considered "accurate" if it displays a cellular caller's location within 300 yards, (the length of three football fields).
- Typically, only larger metropolitan areas have updated **9-1-1** equipment and technology. Many **9-1-1** centers across the nation are NOT equipped to receive location information. Even if you are in an area that has implemented location technology, if your cell phone is out dated it may not be capable of providing location information.
- Keep your cell phone battery charged.
- If you have children or guests at your home make sure they have access to a phone and know how to use it.



Internet Telephone Service

Internet telephone service, or Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), may look and appear to work like a traditional phone, but it connects to the Internet, not a telephone line. Below are several critical factors to consider regarding the impact of this service on your ability to call **9-1-1** in an emergency.

- **9-1-1** service may not be available for Internet/VoIP phones in all areas. Since the services and limitations vary by provider, be sure to read the service contract of your Internet/VoIP provider closely to see what emergency calling features may be offered and their limitations.
- Some Internet/VoIP providers automatically offer an emergency calling feature, although it differs from traditional **9-1-1** service. Other providers require subscribers to activate and register for emergency calling services, or offer no emergency calling services at all.
- Even if you activate the emergency calling feature offered by your Internet/VoIP phone provider, your phone number and address may not be displayed for the **9-1-1** calltaker. You must provide your correct phone number and exact location.
- Some Internet/VoIP services allow customers to take their network adapter box with them while traveling. With this mobility feature, your emergency call to **9-1-1** may be routed to the **9-1-1** answering point that services the home area and not the area where the box is currently being used.



Wireless Number Portability

If you decide to change your cellular phone carriers but keep your same cell phone number, remember it can take up to two weeks before your information is entered into the carrier's database. Therefore, if calling **9-1-1** during that time, your cell phone carrier may not be able to provide **9-1-1** calltakers with your cell phone number.

Your new cell phone carrier may not be capable of providing a location to **9-1-1** calltakers. When looking for a new cellular phone provider, be sure and check the level of service they can provide.

Other Important Tips

- Always know your location and be ready to give directions to the **9-1-1** calltaker using cross streets, mile markers, landmarks, city and county names.
- Always know your cell phone number.
- Tell the **9-1-1** calltaker what the emergency is.
- If your call is disconnected dial **9-1-1** again and let them know you were disconnected.

Bottom Line

Choose your phone wisely. Your life could depend on it! Research your decision. Know the benefits and limitations of the phone service prior to making a commitment or signing a contract.

