

Dialing 9-1-1 By Mistake



If you dial 9-1-1 by mistake — you hit the wrong button on your phone, for example — don't just hang up. In areas where dispatchers can trace the call, a fire truck, ambulance or police car may arrive at your residence. Tell the operator what happened so that he or she knows that there is no real emergency. If you are ever in doubt and no one is around to ask, it's better to call 9-1-1 and let the operator decide if it's a real emergency than to take the chance that someone who needs help doesn't get it quickly.

When Not To Call 9-1-1



Emergency dispatchers stress that you should never call 9-1-1 for information, for your pets, or to pay a traffic ticket. Dialing 9-1-1 as a prank is considered a crime in many places. Whenever a 9-1-1 operator has to take a non-emergency call, it could delay getting emergency services to someone who really needs them.

When To Call 9-1-1



A 9-1-1 emergency is a situation in which someone needs immediate help because he or she is injured or in immediate danger.



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Call 9-1-1 if there's a fire, if someone has had an accident, or if you see a crime being committed. When you call 9-1-1, the emergency dispatch operator will probably ask what, where, and who questions such as:

- **“What is the emergency?” Or “What happened?”**
- **“Where are you?” Or “Where do you live?”**
- **“Who needs help?” Or “Who is with you?”**

Although you may feel a sense of panic when faced with an emergency, try your best to stay in control. The operator needs the answers to specific questions to decide what type of emergency workers would be sent and where to send them. Give the operator all the relevant information you can about what the emergency is and how it happened. If someone is unconscious or has stopped



breathing, the 9-1-1 operator may give you instructions for immediate help that you can provide, such as administering CPR or clearing the person's breathing passage.

Stay calm and speak slowly and clearly so that the 9-1-1 operator can understand you. Stay on the phone and do not hang up until the operator tells you it is OK. That way, you can

be sure that the operator has all the information that's needed to get help to you fast. It's easy to assume that operators can trace where a call is coming from, but that's not always the case. Don't hesitate to call 9-1-1 if a friend has taken drugs or has done something else that's life threatening. You may be afraid you'll get your friend in trouble, but calling could mean the difference between life and death.

Children as young as three years old can begin learning how and when to call 9-1-1 in the event of an emergency. Teaching children about 9-1-1 ensures they use it properly and do not call 9-1-1 unnecessarily.