

From the Sheriff:

When should you call 9-1-1? There are many times when someone does not know when the proper time is to call 9-1-1. 9-1-1 should be used to report an emergency; a crime in progress, a fire or when an ambulance is needed.

If you dial 9-1-1 in error, do not hang up the telephone. Instead, stay on the line and explain to the dispatcher that you dialed by mistake and that you do not have an emergency. If you do hang up, the dispatcher will call back to confirm that there is no emergency. If you don't answer, a deputy must be dispatched to confirm that you are okay. This needlessly takes resources away from genuine emergencies.

When you dial 9-1-1, the call is answered immediately by a dispatcher. The dispatcher will first ask you for the location of your emergency. The enhanced 9-1-1 system will display your telephone number and address; however the dispatcher must verify the location of the emergency and will ask you for more specific location information about the victim or suspects.

Stays on the line with the dispatcher-do not hang up until the dispatcher tells you to. In some cases the dispatcher will keep you on the line to ask additional questions or to obtain on-going information while the emergency personnel are responding.

Be patient as the dispatcher asks you questions. While you are answering the dispatcher's questions, they are entering the information into the computer aided dispatch system and relaying the information to the deputies. If you are reporting an emergency, emergency response personnel are being dispatched by another while you are still on the line with the dispatcher.

Listen to the dispatcher for instructions. The dispatcher may tell you to leave the building, go to another or take other actions to protect yourself. Follow any instructions that the dispatcher gives you, such as meeting the officers at the door, or flagging down the firefighters at the curb. Secure any dogs or other pets that may interfere with the emergency response.

The dispatcher may also ask you to provide a description of the people or vehicles involved in the incident. This may include: race, sex, height, weight, color of hair, clothing description, glasses, facial hair, and type of vehicle, color, make and model.

Currently if you dial 9-1-1 from your cell phone, your telephone number and location will not be displayed however the Dodge County Sheriff's Department has recently been awarded funding to purchase equipment that will allow this function. Dodge County will have enhanced wireless 9-1-1 functioning by summer of 2006 allowing the callers name, phone number and location to be displayed in the communications center. With the upgrade it will also allow the location to be pinpointed on a map within the communications center.

If you are unsure whether to dial 9-1-1 or not, you should dial 9-1-1. The dispatcher will ask the necessary questions to determine if your call is an emergency. It is the goal of the Communications Center to effectively, courteously and promptly dispatch requests for law enforcement, fire and medical service to the citizens of Dodge County. Thanks for listening tnehl@co.dodge.wi.us.

