

Calling 911 with a cell phone

It seems that more and more people are turning to cell phones as a replacement to their traditional phone line. In light of that, there are some very important facts about calling 911 from a cell phone that you should be aware of and also explain to your children.

Cell phones are obviously very mobile and, as such, not attached to one specific location or address. Traditionally, when you dial 911 from the phone line hooked up at your home or business, your address and name are displayed to the dispatcher at the dispatch center. Dissimilarly, a caller using a cell phone may be calling from anywhere.

When you make a call on a cell phone you are sending signals through the air. Consequently, a cell tower that picks up the signal may be near, but the call may be received in another city or county. This can complicate matters for 911 purposes. In those cases, dispatchers do not immediately receive as specific information to direct emergency response personnel where to find the caller.

The following information should be communicated to the dispatcher immediately, in the event you are using a cell phone: 1.) What city are you calling from; 2.) The type of emergency; and 3.) Your cell phone number, in case the call gets disconnected the dispatcher can then call you back. Also, do not hang up; stay on the line unless the dispatcher directs you otherwise.

According to the FCC, 30% of all 911 calls come from cell phones.