



INGHAM COUNTY 911 CENTRAL DISPATCH

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For Immediate Release:

Ingham County 9-1-1 enhances its service to the community by adding Text-to-911 Services

Ingham County, 01/8/2019, – Lance Langdon 911 Director for Ingham County Central Dispatch announced today that Text-to-911 will be available to all individuals living in or traveling through Ingham County on January 16th, 2019. Text-to-911 is another means of contacting a 911 dispatcher in an emergency situation when a caller is unable to make a voice call. It is important for citizens to know that Text-to-911 is a great addition to our dispatch center, but it should be used in a very limited capacity. It is not the preferred method of receiving emergencies. In fact, citizens should follow this guideline; **CALL 911 WHEN YOU CAN AND TEXT WHEN YOU CAN'T**. We do not anticipate that we will receive many emergencies via text. Most 911 centers currently using Text-to-911 see very low percentage of usage.

Some examples of when texting would be appropriate are in cases where a caller cannot speak. This could be for various reasons such as they do not want a suspect to know they are notifying 911 for help. It is also another tool for our hearing impaired community to get emergency help sufficiently. Nationwide, it is estimated there are more than 37 million individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability. Text-to-911 could also be used when there is a reduced level of service for wireless devices, or limited coverage in certain areas to make a voice call, but a text message could go through as it does not require the same signal strength to deliver a message.

How to text 911 in an emergency:

- Enter the numbers “911” in the “To” field;
- The first text message to 911 should be brief and contain the location of the emergency and type of help needed
- Push the “Send” button.
- Be prepared to answer questions and follow instructions from the 911 dispatcher.
- Text in simple words – please don’t use abbreviations.
- Keep text messages brief and concise.
- When the session is over, you will be notified when the 911 dispatcher ended the call.



Below are a few things to know if you need to text 911:

- Text location information is not equal to current location technology.
- It is important for people who use smart phones to recognize that text-to-911 will not work on messaging applications that may “look” like SMS texting, but are actually “over the top” applications using features that are not SMS texting, such as iPhone messaging.
- As with all text messages, 911 messages *can* take longer to receive, can get out of order or may not be received.
- Text-to-911 is not available if you are roaming.
- A text or data plan is required to place a text-to-911
- If texting to 911 is not available in your area, or is temporarily unavailable, you will receive a message indicating that texting 911 is not available and to contact 911 by other means.
- Photos and videos cannot be sent to 911 at this time.
- Text-to-911 cannot include more than one person. Do not send your emergency text to anyone other than 911.
- **Do not text and drive!**

Please see the attached map of Michigan provided by the State of Michigan 911 Administrator’s Office. There are 46 out of Michigan’s 83 counties that offer Text-to-911. Currently most of the counties that border Ingham County do offer Text-to-911. There are several counties in Michigan actively working on upgrading to receive Text-to-911 including some neighboring counties. This map will soon be updated to show our new status!

Media will be welcome for the official announcement at 10:00 a.m., January 16, 2019 in the 911 Center’s Conference room. Media please contact the center’s Exe. Assistant at 244-8098 to confirm attendance.