

Special 9-1-1 Tips for Seniors



✓ Invest in a touch-tone phone with large, easy-to-read numbers. Some phones can be purchased with a switch that will go from pulse dialing to touch-tone dialing. Make sure the switch is set to touch-tone.

✓ Call 9-1-1 right away in an emergency.

✓ Dialing “0” will not always connect you with an operator nearby. It may connect you with an operator many hundreds of miles away. Always dial 9-1-1 for local police, fire or medical emergency assistance.

✓ Call 9-1-1 **before** calling a family member. Once help is on the way, arrangements can be made to notify your family.

✓ Stay on the line and answer all questions. The more information they have, the better they are able to help you.

✓ Try to be patient and stay calm. The call taker and emergency dispatchers may need to ask additional questions while help is on the way.

✓ When calling from a land-line, the 9-1-1 system allows the call taker to “know” where you are calling from even if you cannot speak, for instance, if you are experiencing a stroke or if there is an intruder in your home. Just dial 9-1-1 and leave the phone off the hook. **Do not hang up.**

✓ It is a good idea to post your address by your telephone. If you have just moved, you may have a new address—but you may recite your old address in an emergency situation. Or you may have visitors who are not familiar with your address. This makes it difficult for the call taker to verify the address that appears on the computer screen.

✓ Emergency responders cannot help you if they cannot find you. Put your house number—large white numbers against a dark background works best—outside your home so it can be seen from the road day or night.

✓ Any calls to 9-1-1 are free, even from pay or cell phones.

✓ 9-1-1 is a 24-hour-a-day service. You should call immediately when an emergency occurs, even if it is in the middle of the night.

✓ Keep your medical history taped to the refrigerator clearly marked with your doctor’s number(s).



Seniors and 9-1-1

Today's seniors are more healthy and active than ever before, but like everyone, they need to pay attention to health and safety risks. For example, Americans over the age of 65 have a fire death rate nearly twice the national average. For those over 75, this jumps to three times the national average. Bob Stuckey, General Manager of Sarasota County Public Safety Communications, offers the following safety prevention tips for common problems facing seniors. Whether living independently or in a care facility, there are steps that seniors can take to remain safe.

9-1-1 DOs and DON'Ts

- ✓ 9-1-1 is for police, fire and medical emergencies.
- ✓ If you call 9-1-1, don't hang up.
- ✓ When you call 9-1-1, pay attention to the questions that you are being asked.
- ✓ Stay calm and speak clearly.
- ✓ Stay on the line until you are told to hang up.
- ✓ For further questions or for additional information, contact your local 9-1-1 Center.



This pamphlet pertains to traditional 9-1-1 service. For information on other 9-1-1 services such as 9-1-1 & Children, 9-1-1 & Seniors and 9-1-1 & VoIP, go to www.ilapco.org, www.illinoisnena.org or contact your local 9-1-1 Center.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT

Seniors and 9-1-1



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