



Using your mobile phone in an emergency

In an emergency, your mobile phone can be a lifeline. Knowing how your device works and the best way to reach out for help can save your life and/or the lives of others.

- In most parts of the country, your mobile phone number and approximate location will be forwarded automatically to the 9-1-1 operator. However, it's important to allow the operator to confirm your number and identify your precise location, or the precise location of the emergency.
- When you call 9-1-1, give your complete 10-digit phone number to the 9-1-1 operator. This is important, because the operator may have to call you back if the call is disconnected.
- In addition, tell the operator as best you can exactly where you are. Remember, your mobile phone can be used anywhere service is available. Only you can provide your precise location or that of the emergency.
- If you are driving, stop your vehicle if it is safe to do so, and look for street signs, addresses or landmarks. If you are driving on a highway, try to provide the highway number, your direction of travel and look for exit numbers or major buildings.

Do not pre-program 9-1-1 into speed-dial.

Unintentional emergency calls from mobile phones can occur if you accidentally press a speed-dial key that has been pre-programmed to call 9-1-1. In some instances, you may not even be aware that the emergency key has been pressed. Check your phone's manual or contact your retail dealer to ensure any pre-programmed emergency numbers have been disabled.

Texting during an emergency

Most mobile phones can send text messages, but remember that **you cannot send text messages to 9-1-1.**

During a large-scale emergency, such as a natural disaster, voice networks can become congested or over-loaded with an influx of mobile voice calls. This can result in individuals not being able to speak with the people they want to contact. In rare instances, it can also hinder communications among emergency service personnel.

Text messages, however, use less network capacity than normal mobile phone voice calls, and can be more reliable for brief communication with friends or loved ones during emergencies. So even if a network is congested with voice calls, a text message may have a higher likelihood of getting through sooner than a voice call. Equally as important, by texting during an emergency, you are freeing up the voice lines for emergency officials to use.