

The Importance of Posting an Address Number for 911



City of Salmon & Lemhi County

With Lemhi County having a 911 system in place, the importance of having an address number on your home can not be emphasized enough. **(These are not actual 911 calls but are examples of what could happen)**. "A call was placed to 911 reporting that a man was undergoing cardiac-arrest. The EMS was dispatched to the address. They were desperately searching for an address number on homes along the street that did not have any house numbers on them. It is also extremely important that you use the physical address that E911 has assigned you. A call was placed to 911 reporting that a small child was choking. The physical address of this call was 504 Highway 65. At the beginning of their driveway the home owners had put up a street sign that had Aprils Way on it. The EMS was extremely confused as they desperately searched for the correct location." **"In life-threatening situations, every minute is critical"**

In an effort to serve you better, the City of Salmon & Lemhi County is requesting that residents cooperate in posting their street numbers on their homes or so that it is easily viewable from the front of your residence. If you have a driveway and are the only residence on that driveway posting the number at the beginning of it would work. Never put up a road sign that does not match your physical 911 address. "When Emergency Services are called to a home for an emergency, time is always critical. That means finding your residence as quickly as possible. Walk out to the street in front of your home and see if your house number can be easily seen. If it can be, then the emergency services have a greater chance of possibly saving a life." If you do not know your physical address you may call 756-3214 for City addresses or for County addresses you may call 756-6913 Ext 264.

Guidelines:

- The numbers on residences should be at least 4 inches high. Numbers should be a contrasting color to the background.
- Numbers should be placed on, above, or at the side of the main entrance, so that they can be easily detected from the street.
- If the entrance is more than 50 feet from the street, or cannot be seen from the street, a second set of numbers should also be displayed on a post at the street or end of the drive.
- Remember - your mailman always comes the same way. Police cars and fire trucks may come from any direction. Be sure to mark your house number in such a way that it may be easily seen, no matter which direction they are approaching.
- Reflective numbers or one of the new light-up signs are great.
- We do not address bare property.
- When a building permit has been issued and your permanent driveway is installed we will then address your residence.

- On rare occasions we may require that you change your physical address in order to obtain the desired accuracy of the E9-1-1 system.
- At the very least, any house number is better than none at all. The main concern of everyone is for the safety of the residents of Salmon & Lemhi County. You never know when you may be the next one to call 911 for an emergency. Be sure your house number is posted and visible from the road so you can be found as quickly as possible as every minute counts.

Using a cell phone for emergency calls

When you make a 911 call on a cell phone, you are sending signals through the air. The tower that picks up your phone's signal may be near, but it isn't enough to tell the dispatcher where to find you. It's like playing "Marco Polo" in the pool - blindfolded with just sound to guide you. Cellular technology does not yet allow for your location to be pinpointed by the 911 system. If you are not familiar with your exact location, it is crucial that you give as much information about your surroundings as possible.

Although wireless telephone providers, the FCC, and 9-1-1 organizations are working together we are still a few years away from making cellular 911 as effective as traditional 911 services.

Parents Your old or deactivated phones -- if they still have battery power -- are capable of calling 911. If you are allowing your children to play with these old phones consider taking the battery out of them.

Since the call came into the 911 call center the dispatcher may assume that this is an emergency call therefore he or she may start calling cell-phone companies, hoping to gain information about the phone's most recent owner and get a possible address. This can be very time consuming and cause much unnecessary worry.

When should you call 911?

Any incident that threatens health, life, or property should be reported to 911. Crimes that are in progress, threatened or have already occurred as well as fires or medical problems requiring emergency assistance are some examples. 911 operators are trained to ask specific questions to determine the most appropriate response by public safety officers. Normally your call is taken by a call-taker who enters the information you give them into a computer system.

When you dial 911 from a traditional telephone, one that is wired into a house or other building, the location from which you are calling is displayed on a computer screen in front of the 911 operator. If you cannot speak, either because of a communications impairment, illness, or crime in progress, a police officer is sent to the location to check for any trouble.