Okaloosa County
News Release

Update: AT&T Added to List for Text to 911
Voice Calls to 9-1-1 Are Still the Best and Fastest Way to Contact 9-1-1

Okaloosa County Department of Public Safety recently implemented **Text–to–9-1-1** service for Okaloosa County today. AT&T, T-Mobile and Verizon Wireless customers can now send a text (up to 140 characters) to 9-1-1 in an emergency.

Text to 9-1-1 should only be used in an emergency situation, when placing a voice call is not possible. For instance, if the caller is deaf, hard-of-hearing, speech impaired, or when speaking out loud would put the caller in danger. **Call if you can, text if you can't.**

If there is an emergency and you are unable to make a call, remember these steps:
- [ ] *Don't text and drive*
- [ ] In the first text message send the **location and type of emergency.**
- [ ] Text in simple words - **Send a short text message without abbreviations or slang.**
- [ ] Be prepared to answer questions and **follow instructions from the 9-1-1 call taker.**

Don't Abuse 9-1-1—Text-to-9-1-1 service is ONLY for emergencies.
- [ ] *It is a crime to text or call 9-1-1 with a false report.*

The Text-to-9-1-1 service will have many challenges.
- [ ] A text or data plan is required to place a Text-to-9-1-1
- [ ] As with all text messages, messages to 9-1-1 may take longer to receive, may get out of order, or may not be received at all.
- [ ] If you do not receive a text response from 9-1-1, try to contact 9-1-1 via voice phone call.
- [ ] **Photos and videos cannot be sent to 9-1-1 at this time.**
- [ ] Text-to-9-1-1 cannot include more than one person. Do not send your emergency text to anyone other than 9-1-1 (**no group text messages**).
- [ ] *Voice Calls to 9-1-1 Are Still the Best and Fastest Way to Contact 9-1-1.*

Sprint Wireless Text to 9-1-1 services should be implemented within Okaloosa County soon. **Remember**, **Text-to-9-1-1 service is not available everywhere in Florida and the United States.**

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