Using 9-1-1 on Your AT&T Mobility Phone

The U.S. federal government has designated 9-1-1 as the national uniform code for reaching emergency services (e.g., police, fire, emergency medical). AT&T works with public safety agencies across the country to provide reliable 9-1-1 service for our customers.

There are two kinds of wireless emergency services: Basic 911 Service and Enhanced 911 Service. With Basic 911 Service, you are connected to the emergency operator, but no location or call-back information is displayed about your call. With Enhanced 911 Service, both location and call-back information is provided.

Enhanced 911 Service is divided into two different categories—one which provides rough location information based on the location of the cell site hosting the call; the other provides more precise data based on your handset device’s location. These “enhanced” 9-1-1 capabilities are not available everywhere, and must be requested by a local agency. AT&T complies with each request to provide Enhanced 911 Service. Nevertheless you should always be prepared to provide as much information about the location of the emergency as possible.

You are not charged for the minutes you use when placing an emergency call. However, if your 9-1-1 call is disconnected and the emergency operator calls you back, the call from the 9-1-1 center would be subject to your plan’s terms and conditions. (If you have prepaid service, and the account does not have minutes available for incoming calls, they will not be able to reach you.)
AT&T offers the following tips when making an emergency call:

- **Make sure it’s an emergency.** But if you feel life or property is in immediate danger and you need help from a public safety agency, don’t hesitate. This wastes time, and delays an emergency response.
- **“Tell the operator as much information about the location of the emergency as possible and what assistance is needed”**. Stay on the phone and answer all questions until the operator tells you to hang up. You may be asked for your mobile number in case the emergency operator needs to call you back. (Even though emergency operators may have your number and location information, they will usually try to verify it.)
- Most public safety agencies have a regular, seven-digit telephone number for non-emergency calls. It’s a good idea to identify the numbers for the agencies in the areas where you normally travel, and program them into your AT&T Phone. Use these numbers when you need assistance, but the matter is less urgent.
- **DO NOT program 9-1-1 into your phone.** It can lead to accidental calls to 9-1-1 and tie up emergency operators. 9-1-1 is the phone number you won’t ever forget, so it doesn’t need to be in the phone’s memory. Some phones have an emergency speed call capability. This should be turned off, to avoid unintended calls. One of our Customer Care representatives can show you how (Simply dial 6-1-1 on your AT&T Mobility handset to reach Customer Care. There is no charge for this call).

You may have heard that you must enable your handset to allow public safety to find you during an emergency by entering a “locate enable” command. When you place a voice call to 9-1-1, this is not necessary. However, if you attempt to text to 9-1-1 (discussed below) you will need to enable this feature. A Customer Care representative can help to ensure that your phone is set correctly for these services.

Emergency calls are answered by employees of your local or state government. If you would like more information about emergency calling in your area, you should contact your state or local government and ask about your 9-1-1 service.
**Text messaging to 9-1-1**

Your first choice for reaching emergency services should be to place a voice call to 9-1-1.

Text messaging to 9-1-1 is currently available only in limited areas. Subscribers in these areas will be informed of this capability by their local public safety agencies. If your public safety agency does not support text messaging, you will receive an automatic response message when you attempt to text to 911. The message will inform you that texting to 9-1-1 is not available where you are located, and will advise you to place a voice call to 9-1-1.

If service is available in your area, you will need to enable location services on your handset to be able to successfully text to 9-1-1. If you do not, you may receive an error message even if the service is available. Your first choice for reaching emergency services should always be to place a voice call to 9-1-1.

Although text messaging has increased in popularity among wireless consumers as a way to communicate with friends and family, the technology used to send text messages - short messaging service (SMS) - was never designed to serve as an emergency communications service.

There is presently no substitute for voice 9-1-1 calls as a highly reliable means for contacting local public safety agencies in order to get emergency assistance.

AT&T understands that voice 9-1-1 service is not an option for some, such as the speech / hearing-impaired community.

You must have an AT&T service plan that includes text messaging but you will not be charged for a text message to 9-1-1 on your AT&T Mobility handset. AT&T and the National Emergency Number Association (NENA) urge you to remember:

**9-1-1: Call if you can, text if you can’t**
9-1-1 and VoIP Applications

A Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) application operating on an AT&T wireless device that is accessing the AT&T Mobility network uses the device’s data connection and is indistinguishable from other applications using the data connection. AT&T therefore cannot determine whether the user is making a VoIP phone call or making use of any other IP-enabled application.

AT&T Mobility voice 9-1-1 service provides a host of benefits that are unlikely during a VoIP call from your AT&T wireless device, including the ability to determine the routing of the call to the appropriate public safety agency, and the ability to deliver location information and a call back number. Remember, a call to 9-1-1 on your AT&T Mobility handset does not incur any charge.

AT&T understands that the expectations from public safety and consumers is that reliable 9-1-1 service should be provided over wireless VoIP applications, but it is the responsibility of the VoIP application provider to meet any regulatory requirements.

If public safety or consumers have a question about a particular VoIP application, they should contact the VoIP application provider. In addition, you may contact the Federal Communications Commission to discuss whether an application provider is subject to any of the regulatory requirements imposed by the FCC.

Public safety is a top priority for AT&T and we are continually looking for ways to improve technologies and services to ensure that all consumers and public safety personnel have the most robust and efficient wireless emergency communications tools possible.