



El Paso – Teller County 9-1-1 Authority

2350 Airport Road Colorado Springs, Colorado 80910
Phone (719) 785-1900 www.elpasoteller911.org Fax (719) 579-6427

For Immediate Release

Contact: Ben Bills, (719) 785-1900

Subject: Text-to-9-1-1 is now available in El Paso and Teller Counties

We will be announcing the availability of Text to 9-1-1 this afternoon at **3:30 PM**

Location: The Independence Center – 729 S. Tejon St. in Colorado Springs

When an emergency occurs, calling 9-1-1 isn't always an option. Residents in El Paso and Teller counties can now send text messages to 9-1-1. Text-to-9-1-1 provides accessibility to the hearing and speech-impaired population and provides an alternative to reach help in a dangerous situation when a voice call is not possible or where a voice call fails due to a high-volume of activity. We are pleased that this service is now available however; The El Paso-Teller County 9-1-1 Authority asks that you "Call if you can, text if you must."

How to text-to-9-1-1 in an emergency

- Enter the numbers "911" in the "To" field
- The first text message to 9-1-1 should be brief and contain the location of the emergency and type of help needed (Police, Fire, Medical)
- Push the "Send" button
- Be prepared to answer questions and follow instructions from the 9-1-1 call taker
- Text in simple words – do not use abbreviations or slang
- Keep the text message brief and concise

When to text 9-1-1

- If you are deaf or hard of hearing, speech impaired, or non-verbal
- When making a voice call could put you in danger
- If you are injured and cannot speak
- If you are in a remote location and can only send text messages

What you should know

- Photos and videos cannot be sent to 9-1-1 at this time
- Text-to-9-1-1 will only work in SMS format. A "group text" will cause your message to 9-1-1 not to go through. Do not send your emergency text to anyone other than 9-1-1. Do not use emoticons or other symbols and do not use abbreviations or acronyms
- You may receive a "bounce back" message that says "**For Emergency Only, Text-to-9-1-1 not available**" if a network provider is experiencing technical difficulties, your device is not supported, or you have traveled to an area where Text-to-9-1-1 is not supported
- You must text from a mobile device with a service plan. You cannot text 9-1-1 with a third party app
- Please do not text and drive

Please use Text to 9-1-1 for emergencies only. Call if you can, text if you must.