

# Everything You Need to Know About Text to 9-1-1



[www.lewistownpolicedepartment.com](http://www.lewistownpolicedepartment.com)  
[dgremaux@ci.lewistown.mt.us](mailto:dgremaux@ci.lewistown.mt.us)

## **What is text-to-9-1-1?**

Text-to-9-1-1 refers to the ability to send text messages to local 9-1-1 call centers during an emergency. The Central Montana 9-1-1 Center is currently equipped to receive and handle text-to- 9-1-1 calls.

## **When should text-to-9-1-1 be used?**

Text-to-9-1-1 will be very useful to those who are hard of hearing, deaf, or speech-impaired. Text-to-9-1-1 could also help in situations when a caller is facing a threatening situation and a voice call could increase the threat; the caller is injured and cannot speak; in bad voice area, however text works or other scenarios.

## **How do I text 9-1-1?**

Please remember that texting should only be used when you are unable to make a voice call to 9-1-1. To text 9-1-1, follow these steps:

- 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
- Push the send button
- Be prepared to answer questions and follow instruction from the 9-1-1 call taker
- Text in simple words – do not use abbreviations or slang
- Keep text messages brief and concise

## **Do all wireless providers offer this service?**

Currently, all carriers have agreed to offer the text-to-9-1-1 service in the Central Montana 911 Center Jurisdiction. IF service is sporadic across Fergus, Judith Basin and Petroleum County sometimes a text may go to a neighboring county providing Text services.

## **Can I text 9-1-1 outside of Fergus, Judith Basin and Petroleum County?**

When texting 9-1-1 in areas that do not yet receive 9-1-1 texts, you will receive an automatic text reply, notifying you that text to 911 is not available. In these instances, you will need to make a voice call.

## **Can I text 9-1-1 from my free texting application?**

Only consumers who have purchased a text or data plan through their wireless provider can send text messages to 9-1-1. Text message rates apply. Third party texting applications will not support text-to-9-1-1.

## **I have photos or video. Can I send it to 9-1-1?**

At this time, your dispatch center has limited capability. Photo or video attachments should only be sent when absolutely necessary.

*If you have any questions about text-to-9-1-1, please contact Central Montana 9-1-1 Center directly at 406-535-1800 or visit our website at [www.lewistownpolicedepartment.com](http://www.lewistownpolicedepartment.com)*