

Colorado 9-1-1 Resource Center

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Issues Effecting 9-1-1 in Colorado

The Importance of Effective 9-1-1 Services

- 9-1-1 is the **first link** in the **public safety response chain**.
- Most crimes and other emergencies are initially reported to authorities through 9-1-1.
- The public has come to depend on a reliable, consistent 9-1-1 service nationwide.
- The more the public is willing to use the 9-1-1 system to report emergencies, the more effective the system is.
- Visible weakness or gaps in 9-1-1 service reduce the public's trust in the system, which greatly reduces the effectiveness of the system.

Current Weaknesses Threatening 9-1-1

- Gaps in the level of service offered by 9-1-1 public safety answering points (PSAPs) nationwide. Wireless Enhanced 9-1-1 is available in most areas in Colorado, but not all.
- As new telecommunications devices become available, it is essential that they be required to provide location information in their communication with 9-1-1 centers.
- The funding model for 9-1-1 services in most states, including Colorado, was based on surcharges applied to monthly phone bills. Pre-paid cell phone services or as-needed voice-over-Internet services have resulted in a drop in revenue for most 9-1-1 service areas, even as workload goes up.
- With the proliferation of wireless technologies available to the public, ensuring that sufficient radio spectrum is set aside for public safety is **essential**. This is even more important as local, state, and federal agencies move toward a more integrated, interoperable public safety radio network.

The Future of 9-1-1

- The current 9-1-1 infrastructure **is 40 years old**, and is limited in its capabilities.
- E9-1-1 must now transition into the Next Generation 9-1-1, or NG9-1-1.
- This requires transitioning from a conventional telephone system to a high bandwidth IP-enabled network.
- This will allow dispatch centers to receive video and other data from an ever-growing range of devices that exist now or may enter the market in coming years. It will also allow information to be shared more easily between 9-1-1 call centers and other public safety agencies.
- Transitioning to an NG9-1-1 system will require investments in infrastructure, upgrading of equipment at the local level, additional training of personnel, and public education efforts.

What You Can Do

- Support the appropriation of funds for upgrading 9-1-1 infrastructure and grants to local 9-1-1 call centers for improving service.
- Support measures to ensure that sufficient radio spectrum is set aside for public safety purposes.
- Support measures that require telecommunication device manufacturers to cooperate with NENA efforts to build on their motto: "EMERGENCY HELP. Anytime, anywhere, any device."
- If you have not done so already, **join the E9-1-1 Caucus** to keep up-to-date on current issues affecting the 9-1-1, the first link in the public safety chain.