

Fired Up for Payson

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By Vince Palandri, Fire Fighter, Payson Fire Department

It has become a common sight: People with cellular phones pressed to their ears, talking to friends or closing a business deal, as they drive their cars, eating their lunch or standing in line at the bank. This month the Payson Fire Department would like to discuss cellular phone use for emergency calls.

The affordability of cell phones has put them in the hands of a great number of people, and those carrying them gain a greater sense of security knowing they can summon help from any location, but what constitutes an emergency?

You should call Cellular 911 when there's a life-threatening medical emergency, when a crime is in progress or when a reckless or suspected intoxicated driver is on the road (be sure to get the license plate number). Also call Cellular 911 when a serious traffic accident or incident is blocking lanes, when you see any type of fire, or when a traffic hazard, disabled vehicle or debris is blocking the roadway. Use must use your own judgment on what might be an emergency to you. Don't call Cellular 911 for phone number directories, directions, theater or movie times, or information on weather or road conditions. Keep in mind that emergency lines can get jammed up.

Prepare to tell the dispatcher who answers your call what happened, where and when the accident or life-threatening emergency occurred. Try to keep in mind the last thing you saw, town you passed, or better yet what mile marker your near. There's a lot at stake when we dial 911 on our cell phones: the moments between your call and emergency response could be a difference of life or death. Unlike with landline 911, dispatchers cannot identify the cellular phone number or the location of the cellular phone, which is why it's so important to give operators your number and provide them with your location and the exact location of the emergency. If the accident you just witnessed could possibly be hard for emergency responders to find, even if you do not want to be involved, or if the accident is not safe for you to be involved in, PLEASE stick around long enough to direct them to the scene.

Tips & Warnings

Cellular 911 is an important safety tool, but if you don't know your location, emergency response personnel might be delayed. Every second counts during an emergency.

Beware that emergency switchboards get overwhelmed when too many cellular phone users call about a single emergency. If it looks like others have called or the situation is under control, use your best judgment.

What To Do Immediately

Be safe, be smart. If you are driving and witness an emergency, stop your vehicle if it is clear, safe and legal.

Injuries? [Call 911 immediately](#). Include the exact location, number of people, type of emergency, vehicles involved, and any injuries. No cell phone? Ask another witness to make the call. Think someone needs help right away? Tell the 911 operators what is happening and take advice from them. DO NOT remove a child from their car seat, even if they do not appear to be hurt. You can remove the car seat from the vehicle if needed, and still leave the child restrained in the safety seat. You may increase internal or spinal injuries moving the victim. Wait for emergency medical personnel. Comfort the child with words and songs. If Adults are complaining of pain, again have them remain in the vehicle until emergency responders arrive unless conditions or environments require the immediate evacuation of the area.

As emergency responders, we thank you all that help and are involved when someone is in need.

Until next time be “ Fire up about 9-1-1 safety” in your home and on the road.