



COWLITZ 911
Administrative Offices
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MEDIA RELEASE FORM

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|--|---------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Person Completing Form Deanna Wells | Contact # 360-431-4712 | Date Completed 01/26/2020 | Time Completed 09:00 | Media Release # 2020-1 |
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Type of Incident
Cowlitz 911 – TEXT to 911 is now live in Cowlitz County

Cowlitz 911 announced today that they are the first 911 Center in the State of Washington to begin accepting integrated text messages to 911. The goal of Cowlitz 911 is to be there for citizens when they need help, and the text service is another way for us to serve you.

Cowlitz 911 Executive Director Phil Jurmu said about the new service, “Helping people in need is the mission of 911 and the text to 911 service will help save lives.”

What are the positive impacts to our community?

The new technology improves 911 services by reducing the time it takes a dispatcher to gather information in certain types of emergencies.

Emergency responses from individuals with hearing or speech disabilities or people medically unable to speak, will no longer need to rely on a relay service, or special equipment to communicate with 911. In addition, victims of domestic violence, a hiker lost in the woods with a weak cellular signal, or individuals in situations where they are unable to safely make a voice call, can now text 911.

Text messages to 911 will deliver your location, call back number, and the message. You will be able to communicate via live text with a local 911 dispatcher, and the dispatcher will receive updates on your location if you move during the conversation. If necessary, the 911 dispatcher has the ability to transfer your text message to neighboring 911 centers.

A few things to know:

- **Call if you can, text if you can't.** If possible, 911 would prefer you make a voice call during an emergency, which allows the dispatcher to gather information faster than texting.
- To send a text to 911 from your cell phone go to: New Message, To: (enter 911), go to the message box and type in the type of help you need and the address where emergency responders need to go, send message. A 911 Dispatcher will respond back with a message.
- When texting to 9-1-1 for an emergency the first message should be the location of the emergency including the city, and the type of emergency help needed (police, fire, or medical).
- Keep text messages brief and concise; using full words, not abbreviations.
- Stay with your phone, be prepared to answer questions and follow instructions from the 911 call taker.