

Bureau of Emergency Communications

9-1-1 Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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The 4th of July- Busiest day of the year for 9-1-1

What you can do to help save lives!

July 4th is typically one of the busiest days of the year for 9-1-1 and we expect this year to be no different. On any given day, the Bureau of Emergency Communications (BOEC) receives more than five thousand 9-1-1 and non-emergency telephone calls. On July 4th, we can expect that number to increase...drastically. What does this mean for 9-1-1? More importantly, what does this mean for the citizen's of Multnomah County?

During recent months, we have seen the number of calls to 9-1-1 increase, while staffing at BOEC decreases, due to budget cuts. We are asking our 9-1-1 dispatchers to do more, with less. How does this affect you? If you call 9-1-1 or non-emergency, you may wait on hold for someone to answer. The length of time you wait will vary depending on the time of day you call, how many other people are calling 9-1-1 to report the same problem, etc.

Our goal at BOEC has always been to answer 9-1-1 calls within twenty seconds ninety percent of the time. We have taken great pride in meeting that goal year after year after year. This past year did not go quite as well. Some months were better than others, but for the past year, we met our goal only eighty-eight percent of the time. This means more people had to wait on hold than ever before. Although there is only a two percent difference from years past, BOEC is not satisfied with eighty-eight percent. Therefore, we must do something and YOU can help.

We want to remind people to **only dial 9-1-1 in the event of an emergency**. If it is not happening right now, it most likely is not an emergency. Do not dial 9-1-1 to complain about fireworks unless it is creating a fire hazard. Do not dial 9-1-1 to ask for the non-emergency number, it is in the phonebook. And lock the keypad on your cell phone to avoid dialing 9-1-1 inadvertently.

By helping 9-1-1 cut down on the number of erroneous calls we receive, you just might be saving a life. The life you help save just may be someone you know and love. If you would like more information about 9-1-1, visit our website at <http://www.portlandonline.com/911>

Call 9-1-1 to – Stop a Crime – Report a Fire – Save a Life

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Safety tips from [The National Council On Fireworks Safety](#)

To help you celebrate safely this Fourth of July, the Consumer Product

Safety Commission and the National Council on Fireworks Safety offer the following safety tips:

- Always read and follow label directions.
- Have an adult present.
- Buy from reliable sellers.
- Use outdoors only.
- Always have water handy (a garden hose and a bucket).
- Never experiment or make your own fireworks.
- Light only one firework at a time.
- Never re-light a "dud" firework (wait 15 to 20 minutes and then soak it in a bucket of water).
- Never give fireworks to small children.
- If necessary, store fireworks in a cool, dry place.
- Dispose of fireworks properly by soaking them in water and then disposing of them in your trashcan.
- Never throw or point fireworks at other people.
- Never carry fireworks in your pocket.
- Never shoot fireworks in metal or glass containers.
- The shooter should always wear eye protection and never have any part of the body over the firework.
- Stay away from illegal explosives.