

Bureau of Emergency Communications

9-1-1 Press Release

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For Immediate Release

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9-1-1 Emergency Number Day Annual Telecommunicator Recognition Day

September 11th is the date nationally recognized as 9-1-1 Emergency Number Day and recognizes 9-1-1 Dispatchers across the country. The day was first proclaimed by President Ronald Reagan in 1987 (see attached page) and has been celebrated ever since, despite the events of September 11, 2001, also known as nine-eleven.

The Bureau of Emergency Communications (BOEC), located in Portland, Oregon, handles nearly one million 9-1-1 and non-emergency calls for all of Multnomah County. With seventy-nine certified dispatchers and another eight dispatch trainees, each dispatcher handles roughly 9,000 calls each year. That's 9,000 opportunities to help someone, 9,000 chances to make a difference, and 9,000 lives that dispatcher can affect.

9-1-1 Dispatchers are true "First Responders." They help people give birth, stop the bleeding, stay safe until help arrives, provide CPR instructions, help people find resolution to problems and crimes, and so much more before emergency crews arrive on scene. Being a 9-1-1 Dispatcher is a thankless job. Dispatchers work in stressful and nearly impossible situations and oftentimes help people on the absolute worst day of their lives. They listen as people scream at them, curse them, and sometimes even listen as crimes and murders are committed. All of this takes a toll on them, yet they come back day after day because they want to help people.

9-1-1 Emergency Number Day is an opportunity for a grateful community to recognize the tremendous contributions our 9-1-1 dispatchers add to our quality of life each and every day. Please take a moment to recognize 9-1-1 Dispatchers throughout the Metropolitan area who provide life-saving services to the community on a daily basis.

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The President Proclamation 5696 of August 26, 1987
August 31, 1987

By the President of the United States of America A Proclamation

Protecting the lives and property of citizens is one of government's fundamental responsibilities. In times of emergency, citizens must have a quick and easy way to summon police and other rescue services. The 9-1-1 emergency telephone number fulfills this need and proves its value hundreds of times every day throughout our country.

In 1968, 9-1-1 was designated the universal emergency telephone number in North America. Today we can see with satisfaction that much has been done to implement this system. Thousands of municipalities have established the 9-1-1 telephone system, making it possible to save more lives and to increase the public's confidence in local emergency response systems. The 9-1-1 system has enabled communities to respond to a greater number of emergency calls with added efficiency and lower costs to the public.

State and local governments have made a commitment to implement the 9-1-1 telephone system across our Nation as soon as possible. Some States have mandated that the system be operational by a certain date, while others have made much progress on a voluntary basis. These efforts to enhance the welfare and safety of our citizens deserve public recognition and every commendation.

The Congress, by Public Law 99-448, has designated September 11, 1987, as "9-1-1 Emergency Number Day" and has authorized and requested the President to issue a proclamation in observance of this occasion.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, RONALD REAGAN, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim September 11, 1987, as 9-1-1 Emergency Number Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of August, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and eighty-seven, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twelfth.

Ronald Reagan