

# Bureau of Emergency Communications (BOEC)

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The Bureau of Emergency Communications (BOEC) is the Public Safety Answering Point for Multnomah County, Oregon. BOEC is responsible for answering 9-1-1 & Non-Emergency calls and dispatches police, fire & medical personnel for Multnomah County, Oregon.

BOEC is operated by the City of Portland and has agreements with partner agencies to provide call-taking and dispatch services. Agencies include: Portland Police, Portland Fire & Rescue, Gresham Police, Gresham Fire, Multnomah County Sheriff's Office, Fairview Police, Corbett & Sauvie Island Volunteer Fire, and Multnomah County Emergency Medical Services.

## 9-1-1

9-1-1 is the emergency telephone number for the North American Numbering Plan (NANP), one of eight N11 codes. This number is intended for use in emergency circumstances only, and to use it for any other purpose (such as prank calls) can be a crime. In over 98 percent of locations in the United States and Canada, dialing "9-1-1" from any telephone will link the caller to an emergency dispatch center, which can send emergency responders to the caller's location in an emergency. In approximately 96% of the US, the Enhanced 911 system automatically pairs caller numbers with a physical address.

### Problems When Calling 9-1-1

Inactive phones: You may still dial 9-1-1 from an inactive telephone or cell phone, but 9-1-1 is unable to call you back if they have any trouble finding your location.

Cell phone locations: 9-1-1 can narrow down a cell phone location fairly accurately, but they cannot pinpoint your location in a large building. Are you on the 1st floor or 30th floor?

## BOEC Management

### Director

Bob Cozzie

### Operations Manager

Lisa St. Helen

### Assistant Operations Manager

Steve Mawdsley

### Assistant Operations Manager

George Long

### Business Operations Manager

Keren Ceballos

### Quality Assurance Manager

Ryan DesJardins

### Client Services Liaison

Patrick Jones

### Emergency Management Coordinator

--- Vacant ---

### Technology Applications Manager

Murrell Morley

### Training & Development Manager

Melanie Payne

VoIP phone locations: Cable companies, traditional wire line exchange providers, competitive exchange providers, internet providers and others are now offering to provide telephone service using an internet connection. The problem for 9-1-1 is that routing these calls to the correct PSAP and delivering location information poses a huge challenge as most internet users can sign on from any location with a high speed internet connection, and may not be afforded automatic routing to the correct PSAP, also location information may not be delivered with their call. To ensure you reach the correct PSAP in an emergency, notify your VoIP provider of your physical address and other information and update that information if you move.

Emergencies Across Jurisdictions: You may dial 9-1-1 from a cell phone in Multnomah County, but get the 9-1-1 center in Clackamas, Clark or Washington County based on the cell towers locations. In many cases, the same streets and addresses exist in these counties and responders may be sent to the address you call about, but in the wrong county.

Number Portability: Local Number Portability was defined in the Telecommunications Act of 1996 as the “ability of users of telecommunications services to retain, at the same location, existing telecommunications number without impairment of quality, reliability, or convenience when switching from one telecommunications carrier to another.” The challenge that this presents to the 9-1-1 community is one of accurately presenting caller information in the PSAP as well as ensuring that caller information is justified to the Master Street Address Guide, which is used to determine the appropriate responder based on a given location.

Misdials: PBX telephone systems often require a caller to dial a 9 prior to the telephone number. Sometimes callers will hit a 9 twice or the combination of the 9 and the phone number have 9-1-1 in it. Cell phones will inadvertently dial 9-1-1 oftentimes either by something pressing against the phone for too long (e.g., the phone is placed in a purse and something presses against it or the phone is placed in a back pocket of pants and someone sits down on the phone, etc.).

Abandoned Calls: As location-based technologies have become ubiquitous within the 9-1-1 center, unintentional calls to 9-1-1 from cell phones provide Calltakers with the handset location. The result to local law enforcement, fire and EMS communities is growing responses to non-emergency calls which then ties up scarce resources.

## TEXT-TO-911

Text-to-911 was implemented in Multnomah County in 2016 and is intended to benefit those individuals that may not be able to speak due to an emergency such as a home invasion or abusive partner, as well as individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have limited speech capabilities. Text-to-911 should only be used for in-progress emergencies, requiring immediate response from police, fire, or medical. If the situation is not an emergency requiring immediate response, you should call the Public Safety Non-Emergency number, 503-823-3333. Text-to-911 takes quite a bit longer to gather information than calling 9-1-1 directly so... *Call if you can, text if you can't.*

## Non-Emergency

To report some non-emergency crimes in Portland & Gresham, you can file a police report online, or you can call the 24-hour number for Non-Emergency calls at (503) 823-3333. Crimes and suspicious activities that fall into this category are:

- A. Situations that don't involve serious personal injury, property damage, or property loss.
- B. Situations in which there is no possibility that the suspect is still at the scene or is likely to return to the scene.
- C. Situations for which an immediate response is not needed.

If there is any doubt as to whether the situation is an emergency, it is always better to be on the safe side and call 9-1-1. The response to non-emergency calls will depend on the relative seriousness or priority of the situation and the availability of an officer. Response times are the longest for so-called "cold crimes" like home burglaries where the perpetrator has fled the scene, no suspects exist, and the victim is in no further danger.

## General Information

For general information regarding city or county departments and services, please call (503) 823-4000 during normal business hours.

BASIC CITY SERVICES	Garbage & Recycling Codes & Ordinances
TRANSPORTATION ISSUES	Abandoned Autos Parking Enforcement Street Maintenance Towing Info/Records
PARKS and the ARTS	League Sports Park Information
24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICES	Sewer Repair Water Main Breaks Traffic Signals
CITIZEN ASSISTANCE and INFORMATION	Code Compliance Graffiti Hotline Job Hotline Noise Control Nuisance

PERMITS, LICENSES and DEVELOPMENT	Building Codes Parades Planning & Zoning
ELECTED OFFICIALS	Mayor Commissioners
COUNTY BUSINESS and COMMUNITY SERVICES	Animal Services Elections Marriage License Passport Tax Assessment
HEALTH SERVICES	WIC Safe-Net Environmental
AGING AND DISABILITY SERVICES	Helpline
LIBRARIES	Reference Line
EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE	YWCA Impact Northwest
COURTS/LEGAL	Family Criminal Civil Parking Public Defender
LAW ENFORCEMENT	Crime Prevention Domestic Violence Child Welfare Victim Assistance

## 2-1-1

For information regarding health and social services in Multnomah County, please call 2-1-1.

HEALTH	Early Childhood & Family Services Maternal, Child & Reproductive Health Services Komen Treatment Access Program
EMERGENCY	Severe Weather Alerts Ebola Hotline Tsunami Debris Hotline
ENERGY	Lists resources to assist with past due utility bills.
FOOD	Assistance
HOUSING	Assistance

## 9-1-1 Timeline (Federal, State, and Local)

**March 1973** – The Federal Government issued a bulletin recognizing the benefits of 9-1-1, encouraged nationwide adoption of 9-1-1 and placed responsibility for its development with local government.

**April 1977** - Boeing Computer Services supplied the first CAD (computer aided dispatch) system in Multnomah County. Storage disks were 20 megabytes so only 1000 incidents could be saved online. Entire incident and unit histories were printed daily in a 7" thick printout for record keeping and research. No online search by address, or any other data element were available, address changes took 6 months to process through Boeing in Seattle, and when the system crashed, all screens went completely blank.

**June 1981** – The Oregon Legislature calls for implementation of 9-1-1 services statewide by December 31, 1991. The purpose was to provide all Oregonians with a single, easy-to-remember number to call for emergency services. The measure instituted a 3% telephone excise tax to help offset the costs of compliance by telephone companies and local governments. The funds were disbursed quarterly to cities and counties on a per-capita basis from a dedicated Emergency Communications Account. Local Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) user groups assumed responsibility for allocating the funds for the planning, installation, operation and improvement of local 9-1-1 systems. At the time, there were over 280 PSAP's in Oregon with only a few providing 9-1-1 services and none providing enhanced services.

**January 1991** – The state/local partnership is a success; Oregon became the sixth state in the country to have border to border 9-1-1 services. During this ten-year period, local PSAP user groups worked to consolidate the call taking and dispatch functions. The number of communication centers declined from 293 to just 91 statewide. Local governments continue to explore all options to improve efficiency without sacrificing public safety.



**February 1991** – Enhanced 9-1-1 was implemented in Multnomah County. The new system brought computerized information about a 9-1-1 caller's location and telephone number. This invaluable feature has nearly eliminated the need for lengthy telephone tracing procedures in the event of hang-ups or "incomplete" calls, and speeds service to people who need emergency help, but may be unable to voice their address or problem.

**June 1991** – The Legislature Mandates Enhanced 9-1-1 in all of Oregon by the year 2000. All Primary PSAP's became Enhanced Capable and completed this mandate by December 31, 1999. The Legislature also increase the rate of taxation from 3% to 5%. The additional 2% was earmarked by the state to pay for state-wide Enhancement of existing 9-1-1 systems and the establishment of a Telecommunicator standards and certification program.

**July 1993** – Oregon became the first state in the nation to establish minimum Telecommunicator and Emergency Medical Dispatcher standards and certification requirements with annual maintenance requirements through a program managed by the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training.

**March 1994** – BOEC implements PRC CAD in Multnomah County. Originally based in San Francisco, PRC was eventually bought by Black & Decker and finally, Northrop Grumman who owns it still today. This new CAD allowed dispatchers to monitor multiple incidents at one time, search previous incidents, and quickly locate relevant responder safety information (i.e. resident anti-police, owns multiple handguns). Cost was 5 million for the CAD and MDT system.

**June 1995** – The Oregon Legislature changed the structure of the tax from 5% of the local access bill to a flat rate of 75 cents on any retail subscriber who has telecommunication services capable of accessing 9-1-1 services. Cellular service was developing rapidly with increasing numbers of 9-1-1 calls being placed on wireless phones. Subsequently, the Federal Communications Commission adopted rules requiring wireless companies to be able to provide the location of a wireless 9-1-1 call by October or 2001 (The Phase II Wireless mandate).

**December 2005** – Oregon set and met the date of December 31, 2005 to be 'Phase II Ready' border to border. PSAP's must now provide mapping, equipment and trained Telecommunicator's to provide this service. Mapping capabilities are available at every 9-1-1 call answering position in order to locate wireless calls using coordinates on a map rather than address.

**April 2011** – Based in Toronto, Canada, the windows based Versaterm CAD system replaces PRC CAD in Multnomah County. Versaterm is also the vendor for RegJIN, which replaced PPDS in April, 2015. Cost was \$14.5 million for the CAD and MDT system.

**June 2016** – Began 24/7 monitoring our new non-publicized text- to-911 program. The Oregon Office of Emergency Management was not prepared to roll out text-to-911 due to various risks associated with the program. Several 9-1-1 centers did not want to wait and worked together to come up with their own text-to-911 program in the meantime. **August 2016** – Following two Portland Metro regional press conferences, 911 centers in Clackamas County, Clark County, Clatsop County, Columbia County, Marion County, and Washington County have recently implemented a text to 911 service. Slogan: ***Call if you can, text if you can't.***

**November 2017** – The State of Oregon provided BOEC an upgrade to the Vesta 9-1-1 Telephone & Mapping system. This integrated technology greatly improves 9-1-1 and emergency call processing capabilities and data analytics. It replaces a similar system installed in the early 2000's and uses the latest in Voice over Internet Protocols (VoIP) for managing call-intake and distribution.

**Looking Ahead** – Next Generation (Next-Gen) 9-1-1 will allow the public to make voice, text, or video emergency “calls” from any communications device via Internet Protocol-based networks. The PSAP of the future will also be able to receive data from personal safety devices such as Advanced Automatic Collision Notification systems, medical alert systems, and sensors of various types. The new infrastructure envisioned by the NG9-1-1 project will support “long distance” 9-1-1 services, as well as transfer of emergency calls to other PSAP's – including any accompanying data. In addition, the PSAP will be able to issue emergency alerts to wireless devices in an area via voice or text message, and to highway alert systems.

## Current & Past Management (alphabetical)

<u>Director</u>	<u>Operations Manager</u>	<u>Assistant Ops Manager</u>	<u>Training Manager</u>
Bob Cozzie	Charlie Makinney	Deneen Hayward	Scott Anderson
Ray Connery	Judy Laborico	George Long	Joe Chinosi
Ed Davis	Pat Price	Steve Mawdsley	Bob Cozzie
Clay Durbin	Jim Ridenour	Mark Schackart	Georgia Marumoto
Jack Horner	Dave Rigby	Lisa St. Helen	Diane Swetrman McDaniel
Charlie Makinney	Bob Skipper		Melanie Payne
Dick Monroe	Toni Sexton		Bridget Phelan
Gary Schrader	Lisa St. Helen		Bonni Reeves
Bob Schwartz	Paul Stein		Dave Rigby
Bob Shook	Marianne (Heisler) Stites		Toni Sexton
Carl Simpson	Jim Thacker		Kathy Winther
Lisa Turley	Lisa Turley		
Sherrill Whittemore			
John Wilson			

## Milestones

1981 – Emergency Services Operator (ESO) job classification was created and 16 employees were hired to dispatch medical calls. These employees worked side-by-side with the ECOs who handled police call-taking and dispatch.

Bear in mind that in the 1980s, BOEC also performed the function now tasked to the Telephone Report Unit (TRU), report-taking of certain cold calls. BOEC had criteria very similar to that of TRU, and on calls such as “cold car prowls” an incident would be created, closed out, and given to the Report Taker to handle. The Bureau typically hired 1-2 people on a part-time (32 hours a week) basis to do so. However, if reports began to stack up, then an ECO would be asked to come back and assist with reports. At some point the concept of having officers on “light-duty” write such reports was formed and that’s how TRU began. In 2014, the Portland Police Bureau renamed TRU as the Operational Support Unit (OSU).



In 1994, BOEC took over Fire Dispatch with the move to a new center. As such, the ESO classification was updated to Emergency Communications Police Dispatcher (ECPD) and Emergency Communications Fire Dispatcher (ECFD). As more personnel were cross-trained to perform both job functions, the Emergency Communications Senior Dispatcher (ECSD) classification was created.

In 2007, the Emergency Communications Call Taker (ECCT) classification was added. Their function is to answer 9-1-1 and Non-Emergency phone calls.

In 2016, the Bureau of Emergency Communications instituted Text-to-911, along with PSAP’s located in Washington, Clackamas, Clark, Columbia, Marion, and Clatsop counties.

## BOEC Locations

### **Prior to 1974**

209 SW Oak Street, Portland, Oregon 97201  
Portland Police Records Division

### **1974 – March 1994**

2690 SE 103rd Drive, Portland, Oregon 97266  
Kelly Butte – Former Civil Defense Center Bunker

From November 1974 until March 1994, the Bureau of Emergency Communications (BOEC) was located in an underground Quonset hut-type structure on 25.6 acres surrounded by a park. Built in 1956, with two-foot-thick concrete walls and buried 30 feet underground, the facility was



originally designed for emergency government operations and was touted as being able to survive a 20-megaton bomb "near-hit" and be self-sustaining for up to 90 days.

In November 1974, BOEC began taking calls for local police agencies, and in January 1980, Multnomah County added the Emergency Medical System (EMS) so that both medical and police calls would be handled by the same bureau. 9-1-1 service was introduced to Multnomah County in November 1981, and several new employees were hired for the specialized task of answering and dispatching medical calls. Cross-training of all employees was conducted as medical and police telecommunicators learned each other's' jobs.

As the facility aged under the pressure of housing a growing 24-hour emergency operation, it became clear that a new center was needed. Ground-breaking began in October 1992 at a new site in SE Portland. The City of Portland chose to combine the construction of the new Portland Communications Center with the purchase of updated computer and radio systems.

### **March 1994 – January 2014**

Portland, Oregon 97266

In March 1994, BOEC personnel moved to their new building and began using a new computer aided dispatch (CAD) system and a new 800 megahertz (MHz) radio system. In addition to BOEC, the 40,000 square-foot facility houses the communications division of the Bureau of Technology Services (Radio Shop), which maintains the 800 MHz radio system used by public safety agencies within the City of Portland, Gresham, Multnomah County, and other government agencies. The Emergency Operations Center (EOC), a branch of Portland Fire & Rescue which plans and implements emergency responses in the event of a county-wide disaster, is also located at the Communications Center.

The final step to consolidating all 9-1-1 services under a single agency occurred in March 1994, when BOEC also began dispatching units for fire departments throughout Multnomah County. Now, when area residents call 9-1-1 for any type of emergency, the call is taken and dispatched from the Portland Communications Center.

In 2001-2002 the Communications Center was dramatically remodeled to better reflect the ever-evolving mission of emergency communications. At the heart of the remodel is a new Operations floor, located atop a raised computer floor that allows a nearly unlimited potential for future growth. The Operations floor features state-of-the-art CAD, telephone, and radio interfaces and ergonomic workstations that far exceed industry standards for comfort and safety.

In addition, the remodel allowed BOEC to create a separate ten-position Computer Lab – a virtual duplication, on a smaller scale, of the Operations floor. This multipurpose room serves as BOEC's on-site communications back-up location. If necessary, all 9-1-1 Operations can be run from the Computer Lab. The Lab sits adjacent to BOEC's new classroom. The classroom features smart technologies that - in conjunction with the Computer Lab - are designed to provide the best possible learning environment.

### **January 2014 – Present**

Portland, Oregon 97266

The Bureau of Emergency Management (PBEM) completed construction and moved into their new building in January 2014. The new building was constructed in the front parking lot of BOEC and took over the BOEC's address. BOEC took on the BTS Radio Shop's address.

## Resources

### Partner Agencies

[Portland Police Bureau](#)

[Portland Fire & Rescue](#)

[Gresham Police Department](#)

[Gresham Fire & Emergency Services](#)

[Multnomah County Sheriff's Office](#)

[Corbett Volunteer Fire Department](#)

[Sauvie Island Volunteer Fire Department](#)

[American Medical Response](#)

[Multnomah County Emergency Medical Services](#)

### Adjoining 9-1-1 Centers

[Portland International Airport Communications Center](#)

[Washington County Consolidated Communications Agency \(WCCCA\)](#)

[Clackamas County Communications \(CCOM\)](#)

[Lake Oswego Communications \(LOCOM\)](#)

[Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency \(CRESA\)](#)

[Columbia 911 Communications District \(C911CD\)](#)

[Hood River County 911](#)

[Oregon State Police Command Center \(OSP\)](#)

[Washington State Patrol Vancouver – District 5 \(WSP\)](#)

### External Links

[Oregon APCO NENA](#)

[APCO International](#)

[National Emergency Number Association \(NENA\)](#)

[Oregon Office of Emergency Management](#)

[American Red Cross](#)

### References

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/9-1-1>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3-1-1>

<http://www.sandiego.gov/police/services/nonemergencies.shtml>