



# Text to 911 Fact Sheet



## What is Text to 911?

Text to 911 allows a person to send a text message (SMS) from a mobile device to 911 instead of placing a phone call. To text to 911, simply enter the numbers "911" in the "To" or "Recipient" field, type a brief but detailed message that includes location and type of the emergency, and press "Send." (Be sure to type only the numbers "911" in the "To" field; do not include any punctuation).

## Service in Osage Beach Begins July 1, 2016

Effective July 1, 2016, The Osage Beach 911 Emergency Communications Center will have the capability to receive text to 911 messages. People in Osage Beach may begin sending text messages to 911 when appropriate.

## Call If You Can, Text If You Can't

Contact 911 only in a fire, medical or police emergency. Public safety officials encourage you to think of text to 911 as a last resort, not the normal process for contacting 911 during an emergency. In other words: "Call if you can. Text if you can't." Calls to 911 are preferred because they are typically more efficient during an emergency.

## Know When to Text to 911:

1. If you are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability.
2. If you cannot speak due to an injury or medical condition.
3. If you are in a threatening situation and a voice call could increase the threat.
4. If you cannot make a call because your mobile phone reception is poor.

## Text to 911 Capability Outside Osage Beach

- Osage Beach is the first and only lake area jurisdiction using text to 911.
- Adjoining 911 centers may implement in the future.
- If text to 911 service is not available where you are located, you will receive a message from the wireless carrier stating that text to 911 is not available. Instead, place a voice call to 911.



## Do Not Text and Drive

Texting while driving is not safe. If you need to text 911 while in a vehicle, be sure you have securely parked your vehicle off the roadway.



## Text to 911 in Languages Other Than English

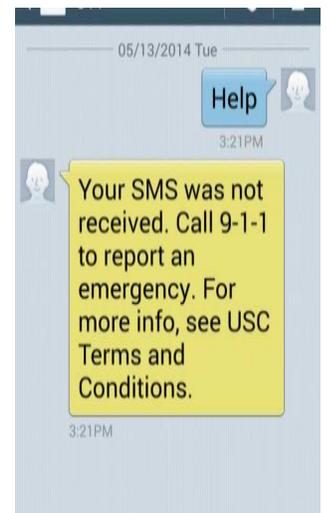
Translation services are not available at this time; therefore, any text to 911 call placed in Osage Beach should be in English.

## Facts About Text to 911

- The location information accompanying a text to 911 is not equal to wireless voice call location technology. Remember: call if you can, text if you can't.
- As with all text messages, 911 text messages can take longer to receive, may be delivered out of order, or may not be received at all.
- A text or data plan is required to place a text to 911. Standard text messaging charges apply.
- Photos and videos cannot be sent to 911 at this time.
- Text to 911 cannot include more than one person. Do not copy anyone on your emergency text to 911.
- Wait until you are safe to notify others of your situation.
- Once received, a person who sends a text to 911 will receive a response from the 911 call center.
- Only text 911 in a fire, medical or police emergency. People who send prank texts can be identified and possibly prosecuted according to local laws/regulations.

## Bounce-back Messages

- If you attempt to send a text to 911 where the service is not yet available, FCC rules require all wireless carriers and other text messaging providers to send an automatic "bounce-back" message.
- Consumers who receive this "bounce-back" message will be advised to contact emergency services by another means, such as by making a voice call or using a telecommunications relay service (the latter for consumers who are deaf, hard of hearing or have a speech disability).
- The bounce-back requirement is intended to inform consumers and minimize the risk of a consumer mistakenly believing that a text to 911 has been transmitted to the PSAP where the service is not available.



## How to Help Spread the Word About Text to 911

- Additional background information regarding national text to 911 efforts are also online:
- National Emergency Number Association, Text to 911 Resources: <http://www.nena.org/?page=textresources>
- Federal Communications Commission (FCC) What you need to know about Text to 911: <https://www.fcc.gov/text-to-911>
- FCC Text to 911 FAQs: <https://www.fcc.gov/guides/text-911-quick-facts-faqs>

