



Feature Story

County of Dufferin
W. & M. Edelbrock Centre
30 Centre Street, Orangeville, ON L9W 2X1

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Experiencing a life-threatening emergency? Know how to call 9-1-1 with tips from Dufferin County

When you're in the middle of an emergency, whether it be a fire, medical situation or you're experiencing a crime, it's inevitable to be stressed. That's why it's important to know how to call 9-1-1 properly to keep yourself, friends, loved ones and community members safe.

"In Dufferin County, the average 9-1-1 call-handling time has increased by more than 90 per cent over the past five years, and a considerable portion of this increase is due to nuisance calls," says Steve Murphy, Manager, Preparedness and 9-1-1, Dufferin County. "9-1-1 is not there to report by-law infractions or to access municipal services. Seconds matter in an emergency, and 9-1-1 operators are there to ensure our community members receive the urgent care they require in times of need. We all must know what to do when calling 9-1-1 to keep Dufferin safe."

Residents are asked to do their part and follow tips from Dufferin County in an emergency.

What is 9-1-1?

9-1-1 is a designated three-digit number to connect callers to police, fire or paramedics. It is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week and can be reached by landline, cellular or VoIP telephone. Those who are deaf can register to text 9-1-1 and if someone does not speak English, 9-1-1 will connect callers with an interpreter.

When should I call 9-1-1?

9-1-1 is for emergencies only. You should only dial 9-1-1 if someone is hurt or in danger or if you need police, fire or emergency medical assistance. If you aren't sure whether your situation is an emergency, you should call 9-1-1.

Do not dial 9-1-1 for things like:

- Finding out why the power went out
- Asking about road conditions
- Requesting community safety presentations
- Complaining about your neighbour's garage band practice
- Reporting a stray dog

- Leaving an anonymous tip

By calling 9-1-1 for non-emergency issues, you are keeping a dispatcher from helping someone with a real emergency. This could cost someone their life.

What should I know about calling 9-1-1? How can I get the required emergency response as quickly as possible?

“There are three main things to remember when calling 9-1-1,” stresses Steve. “Remain calm, know your location and always stay on the line.”

Do not hang up the phone once you are connected to a 9-1-1 operator until they tell you to, even if you are unable to speak. The longer your line is connected, the more likely it is that emergency services will find your location.

If you are transferred to a communications officer with our local police, fire or paramedics, hanging up could cause delays.

9-1-1 is for immediate life-threatening situations – and every second counts in these types of emergencies. We all have a role to play in keeping our community safe.

What do I do if I want to contact the Ontario Provincial Police, Dufferin County Paramedic Services or my local fire department for a non-urgent reason?

You can reach the OPP by calling 519-925-3838 and Dufferin County Paramedic Services at 519-941-28-16 extension 6000. For your fire department, contact your local municipality.

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LIFE-THREATENING EMERGENCY? CALL 9-1-1.

Three steps to getting the right help, as quickly as possible:

Remain calm



Know your location



Stay on the line

