



CORNELIUS POLICE DEPARTMENT

Cornelius 911 Center Text-to-911 Frequently Asked Questions

What is text-to-911 technology?

It is the ability to send a short message service (SMS) text message to 911. Cornelius residents and visitors who have Verizon, Sprint or AT&T Wireless can send a text message to 911 for emergency assistance. All other wireless customers must continue to **call** 911 for emergency help. We will continue to work with other vendors to provide Text-to-911 services but it is up to your carrier to facilitate this capability. So far only those listed have done so.

If you attempt to send a text-to-911 where text-to-911 service is unavailable, you will receive an immediate bounce-back message that text-to-911 service is not available and that you should contact emergency services by a voice call. Customers must be in range of cell towers in the Cornelius, NC area. If customers are outside or near the edge of the town limits, the message may not reach the Cornelius 911 Center.

What is text-to-911 and why would I want to use it?

The texting option is specifically designed for two types of emergency scenarios - potential victims who don't want someone to hear them make a 911 voice call and deaf or hard-of-hearing residents and visitors who may be unable to speak to a telecommunicator. Since the way people communicate is evolving and 911 centers across the nation are evaluating how to adapt to the digital age, Cornelius is offering multiple ways for people to reach out to 911 when they need help. If you are able to make a voice call to 911, and it is safe to do so, you should always make a voice call over text-to-911.

If I am able to text-to-911, will the 911 center automatically know my location?

Texting to 911 is different from making a voice call to 911 in this respect. When you make a voice call to 911, the call taker will typically receive your phone number and your approximate location automatically. This is called "Enhanced 911" or "E911." However, when you text 911 from a wireless phone, the call taker will not receive this automated information. For this reason, if you send a text message to 911, it is important to give the 911 call taker an accurate address or location as quickly as possible, if you can. Texting abbreviation or slang should never be used so that the intent of the dialogue can be as clear as possible.

What are the limitations of text-to-911 technology?

- Text-to-911 is much slower, less automated, and less efficient than calling 911 by voice.
- Cell phones must be active in order to text-to-911.
- At this time we are unable to transfer your text-to-911 call to another agency, if you need fire, medic or another law enforcement agency you should make a voice call.
- All customers need to check with their wireless carrier to see if any text messaging fees apply.
- Non-emergency issues should still be communicated to the Cornelius 911 Center by calling the non-emergency line at (704) 892-7773.

For more information about the Cornelius 911 Center contact:

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