



Text-to-911 now available in the Richmond Capital Region

Getting help in an emergency is now faster and easier for those who are deaf or hard-of-hearing in the Richmond capital region.

As of June 4, those who are not able to call 911 can send a text message to 911 for emergency assistance in Richmond, Chesterfield County and Henrico County. This service already is available in Colonial Heights and Hanover County.

“We encourage residents to call 911 when they can and to text when they can’t,” said Stephen Willoughby, director and chief of Richmond’s Department of Emergency Communications. “If you are deaf or hard-of-hearing, you can’t speak or it’s not safe for you to speak, you can send a text to 911. Otherwise, it’s best for you to call,” he said.

Residents should follow these additional guidelines when texting 911, Willoughby said:

Do:

- Call if you can, text if you can’t.
- Send a text message to 911 if you are deaf

or hard-of-hearing, can’t speak, or it is not safe for you to speak.

- Provide the exact location of the emergency in the text message.
- If you do not receive a reply by text or if you receive a reply that texting is not available, call 911.

Do Not:

- Do not text and drive.
- Do not send photos or videos to 911 at this time.
- Do not copy others on the message to 911.

Text-to-911 cannot include more than one person.

Text-to-911 was implemented in the Richmond Capital Region as the result of a grant awarded by the Virginia Information Technologies Agency in the 2017 fiscal year.

For more information about Text-to-911 in the Richmond Capital Region, visit tinyurl.com/captext911.

For more information about Text-to-911 nationally, visit https://www.911.gov/issue_textto911.html or <https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/what-you-need-know-about-text-911>.