



## CALLING 9-1-1 LANDLINE vs. CELL PHONE

**First and foremost, it is always preferable to find a landline from which to call 9-1-1.** When calls to 9-1-1 are placed via a landline, the caller's location is immediately captured. If the caller hangs up or the call is otherwise interrupted, the 9-1-1 operator can still dispatch resources.

### **Where do 9-1-1 calls go?**

- When calling from a landline, the call is routed to the local law enforcement agency. In the case of Topanga, this call will be routed to the Lost Hills Sheriff's Station.
- When calling from a cell phone, the call is routed to the California Highway Patrol (CHP). In the case of Topanga, this call will be routed to the CHP Dispatch Center located in Downtown Los Angeles. (This dispatch center handles all incoming cell phone 9-1-1 calls originating in Los Angeles County.)

**Why do I get a busy signal or a "wait for next available operator" recording when I call 9-1-1 from my cell phone?** Since all cell phone 9-1-1 calls in Los Angeles County are routed to the CHP Dispatch Center, and since most people have a cell phone these days, the CHP receives a disproportionately large number of 9-1-1 calls. Consider the following example:

- Someone calls 9-1-1 from a landline in Topanga. That call goes to the Lost Hills Sheriff's Station.
- Someone calls 9-1-1 from a landline in Sherman Oaks. That call goes to the LAPD Dispatch Center.
- Someone calls 9-1-1 from a landline in Long Beach. That call goes to the Long Beach PD.
- Someone calls 9-1-1 from a landline in Inglewood. That call goes to the Inglewood PD.
- Someone calls 9-1-1 from a landline in Lakewood. That call goes to the Lakewood Sheriff's Station.
- All of these people call 9-1-1 from a cell phone. All five calls go to the CHP Dispatch Center.

**Is there anything I can do to expedite a call to 9-1-1 if I absolutely have to call from my cell phone?** Yes. If you cannot locate a landline quickly and you absolutely have to call 9-1-1 from your cell phone, you should consider programming the following phone numbers into your cell phone's memory:  
Fire or medical emergencies: Los Angeles County Fire Department Dispatch at (310) 456-6603  
Law enforcement emergencies: Lost Hills Sheriff's Station at (818) 878-1808

**These numbers should only be used if you are using a cell phone. If calling from a landline, ALWAYS DIAL 9-1-1. Further, these numbers should only be used if you are attempting to report an incident that is happening in the Santa Monica Mountains Region (i.e. within the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles County Fire Department and/or the Lost Hills Sheriff's Station). If you are outside of this area and need to report an emergency, you will probably be better off just calling 9-1-1.**

Please note that calls made from a cell phone (whether to 9-1-1 or to the numbers listed above) will not reveal your location to the 9-1-1 operators as landlines do. For this reason, there are two important measures you can take when you connect with the 9-1-1 operator when calling from a cell phone:

- Give your cell phone number to the operator immediately (in case the call is dropped).
- Know the precise location (the location of the incident you are reporting).