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**Sent:** Tuesday, September 01, 2009 4:00 PM  
**To:** undisclosed-recipients:  
**Subject:** Richardson PD - Cell Phones and 911



Did you know that over 20 percent of all US households\* have now disconnected their landline in favor of using their cell phones exclusively for voice communication? With this increase of cell phone usage nationwide it has become clear that we need to educate our citizens about how this impacts access to emergency services. For instance, did you know that when you dial 9-1-1 from your cell phone the public safety 9-1-1 call taker does not receive your home address? Depending on your service provider and what type of phone you have, often the only information the 9-1-1 operator will receive is your cell phone number and the routing tower location. In some cases the 9-1-1 operator will not even receive your phone number. In addition, when you call 9-1-1 from a cell phone, did you know you may not even get your local 9-1-1 center? That's because cell phones are programmed to bounce the signal off of the nearest cell tower, and those cell towers have multiple receivers pointed in different directions mounted on them. So, depending on where you live in a city your signal may bounce off a tower that is actually located in a neighboring city causing your call to be routed to that 9-1-1 center. In order for the police and fire departments to arrive at your emergency in a timely manner your location is vital. That's why it is imperative when you have an emergency and dial 9-1-1 from a cell phone that you first tell the 9-1-1 operator what city you are in and your exact location, i.e., 311 E Main St or corner of Main St and Abrams Rd. Now, technologies are improving, and depending on your cell phone model and service provider, your location may be pinpointed on a map in the 9-1-1 center through GPS or triangulation location technology. But, it is important to remember that the X-Y location is not 100% accurate or address specific. It is simply a point on a map. 9-1-1 operators are trained to ask specific questions to determine the exact location of your emergency, but these follow-up questions take up precious time and slow emergency response. So, remember, when you dial 9-1-1, let the 9-1-1 call taker know what city the emergency is in and the exact location of the emergency. This way the 9-1-1 call taker can connect you with the appropriate agency and you can receive the fastest response possible.

\* Source: The Harris Poll



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