



NEWS RELEASE

TARRANT COUNTY 9-1-1 DISTRICT

December 10, 1996

A Sneak Preview Into the Future of Emergency Services and Cellular Phone Usage

Texas is Leading the Nation in the Improvement of Emergency Services and Cellular Technology

Houston, Texas - The Tarrant County 9-1-1 District, the Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Network and the Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications jointly present a **public proof of concept demonstration** of the first delivery of location technology. This technology assists wireless service providers in meeting Federal Communications Commission (FCC) requirements mandating enhanced 9-1-1 service for those using wireless devices such as cellular phones.

Tarrant County 9-1-1, Greater Harris County 9-1-1 and the Advisory Commission are involved in a **proof of concept** project called the Wireless Integration Project. It involves the technology included in a June, 1996 FCC ruling, which states: (1) a cellular caller's phone number must be identified by October, 1997 (2) the location of the cellular carrier must be identified within a radius of 125 meters in 67% of all cases by October, 2001.

Cellular phones have assisted in the saving of many lives and reporting of emergencies, however, 9-1-1 callers do not receive the same level of service as most wireline customers are accustomed to.

Unlike calling from your home or office phone, wireless callers are not always routed to the appropriate answering point, resulting in critical time being lost in assisting the caller. In addition, the dispatcher does not receive the caller's 10-digit phone number or calling location. If the caller is disconnected, the dispatcher is unable to reconnect to the 9-1-1 caller.

"This is the first time that a cellular carrier is routed to 9-1-1 based on their physical location," said John Melcher, Director of Information Systems for GHC 9-1-1. "Once a system like this is in place in the Network area (approximately 1998), it will lead to all of our 9-1-1 call-takers receiving information required on all 9-1-1 calls and benefiting all of the citizens we serve by reducing emergency response time," said Melcher.

The WIP has demonstrated that wireless subscribers calling 9-1-1 can be accurately located using location determination technology. The 9-1-1 call can be routed to the correct public safety answering point (PSAP) along with the caller's actual phone number, and associated location information can be provided and graphically displayed to the 9-1-1 dispatcher.

The Villages, along IH-10 in Harris County were chosen as the geographic test site. The mapped area included the following: Hedwig Village, Piney Point, Spring Valley, Bunker Hill, and Hunters Creek. The **test 9-1-1 calls** were directed to the Village Police Department.

According to Laverne Hogan, Executive Director of the GHC 9-1-1, "The Texas WIP demonstrates that 9-1-1 can offer to citizens calling on wireless devices, the same level of service which has been available to citizens using wired telephones." continue to offer its features to the citizens for wireless calls as it has done for regular telephone service for many years."

The WIP is the culmination of an 18-month joint effort, involving numerous public and private entities.

The Texas WIP is a consortium of commercial vendors and public safety agencies that joined together to demonstrate that full-featured enhanced 9-1-1 service can be provided to wireless communications subscribers, using existing technology. The Wireless Integration Project consists of the following partners:

- Tarrant County 9-1-1 District
- Greater Harris County 9-1-1 Emergency Network
- Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications
- Northern Telecom
- Southwestern Bell
- GTE
- SCC Communications Corp.
- AGI
- Houston Cellular
- The Village Police Department and Village Fire Department
- GTE Mobilnet

"The Board of Managers and Staff of GHC 9-1-1 along with Tarrant County 9-1-1 and the Texas Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications have been dedicated to providing the best technology available for citizens. The development of technology such as this will help to insure that this is accomplished," said Beth Ozanich, Tarrant County 9-1-1 District Information Services Manager.

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