



Why Does This Matter?

Every year, non-emergency calls routed through 911 delay response to **real, life-threatening emergencies**.

Knowing which number to call — and when — helps dispatchers serve those who need help most. The **National Emergency Number Association (NENA)** and local public safety agencies use three key parameters to categorize calls: **Immediacy, Current Status, and Nature of Request**.

EMERGENCY DISPATCH

Call 9-1-1

IMMEDIATE ACTION REQUIRED

WHEN TO CALL: Immediate action is required to save a life, stop a crime in progress, or prevent a catastrophe.

● **Life-Threatening Crises:**

Chest pain, difficulty breathing, unconsciousness, or serious injuries.

● **Active Hazards:**

Visible fire, smoke, gas leaks, or sparking power lines.

● **Crimes in Progress:**

Active robbery, assault, or a person with a weapon — happening right now.

● **Major Accidents:**

Vehicle crashes with injuries or those causing a significant traffic hazard.

NON-EMERGENCY DISPATCH

Call (540) 382-4343

ROUTINE — NOT URGENT

WHEN TO CALL: You need a responder for an incident that is not urgent or has already occurred.

● **Past Crimes:**

Reporting burglary, theft, or vandalism where the suspect is gone and no immediate danger.

● **Nuisance Complaints:**

Loud music, barking dogs, or parking violations.

● **Minor Incidents:**

Fender-benders with no injuries or property damage discovered after the fact.

● **Suspicious Activity:**

Something that "doesn't look right" but poses no imminent threat.