

# 911 WIRELESS PHONE CALLS IN THE WILDERNESS

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## WHO WILL I REACH?

You need to know that wireless phone service may not be available in the wilderness. If service is available, your 9-1-1 call for help will be picked up by the nearest cellular tower in the most direct line of sight to your location. It will be picked up at a county 9-1-1 center. Since these call answering centers are all located outside the boundaries of the calling area, they would have no way of knowing from where you are calling unless you tell them. Be prepared to provide your location. Remember, help may be several hours away or longer. Use 9-1-1 only in case of an actual emergency.

## REMEMBER TO:

1. Start out with a fresh, fully charged battery and carry extra charged batteries with you. Keep batteries warm for extra-long use.
2. Be prepared to give complete information about the nature of the emergency. You may only be able to make one call. Turn the phone off when not in use.
3. Establish a call schedule with the emergency center so there are specific times when you will have your phone turned on to receive calls or to make calls out.

## BE SURE YOU KNOW:

1. Your location, including the trailhead and nearest city, destination or waypoints.
2. Your wireless phone number, including the area code.
3. How your wireless phone works. Instruct everyone in your party on how to use your phone. Your phone may be pre-programmed to dial 9-1-1 with one button. You could accidentally call 9-1-1 and not even know it. Handle your phone carefully to prevent the automatic misdialing of 9-1-1.
4. How to increase your signal strength, to include: pointing your antenna up; finding a clearing; gaining elevation; and turning your body - you may be obstructing the signal.

**Wireless phones should NEVER replace preparedness.**