



1705 Vaquero Parkway  
Bozeman, MT 59715  
406-582-2092

<https://gallatincomt.virtualltownhall.net>

For immediate release: June 1, 2021

**Press Release**  
**Text to 911 Now Available in Gallatin County**

Gallatin County 911 is pleased to announce another tool for citizens and visitors to reach our dispatchers during emergencies.

Text to 911 is now available in Gallatin County. We urge the community to always call 911 when possible, but to use this service when that is not feasible.

The ability to text message dispatchers will be beneficial in many situations.

Text to 911 provides deaf, hard of hearing, or speech impaired communities direct access to 911 services.

It also provides access to 911 in situations where safety would be compromised if a caller were speaking out loud, such as domestic violence, home invasions, or active shootings, for example.

And it enables contact with dispatch when cellular service is too poor for voice calls.

“Text to 911 is a great resource we’ve added to better serve our community,” said Gallatin County 911 Director Tim Martindale. “For our deaf, hard of hearing and speech impaired communities, this offers them streamlined access to emergency services. To others that find themselves in situations where speaking isn’t an option due to emergent circumstances, this allows them to safely get information to our staff.”

“An additional benefit to our area is those who find themselves in areas where a phone call is impossible due to the cell coverage but a text message might be able to be sent, this gives them the opportunity to get information out to the 911 center,” Martindale continued. “This is a big step in the right direction as we continue to serve our community and give them the resources needed to keep them safe.”

Gallatin County is one of 32 911 centers in Montana to implement text to 911.

“The ability for our citizens to reach 911 in the case of an emergency is paramount,” said Gallatin County Sheriff Dan Springer. “There are times when voice communication is either impossible or unsafe and this allows us the opportunity to respond to those calls. This is a great step forward for this community and we appreciate all the efforts of our 911 center to make this happen.”

A large, stylized graphic of the number "9-1-1" is positioned in the bottom right corner. The numbers are white with a slight shadow, set against a dark grey background that resembles a mountain range silhouette.

“We greatly appreciate the effort Gallatin County Communications has put into offering this capability,” said Bozeman Police Chief Jim Veltkamp. “It is a huge benefit to be able to text 911 in situations when calling is not possible. We look forward to seeing how this new service enhances our ability to keep this community safe.”

**How to text 911 when you’re having an emergency:**

- To text 911, create a new text message
- Enter “911” into the “To” field. No dashes are necessary.
- In this text message, include the following, with No. 1 being the highest importance:
  1. Location of the emergency (including city/name of business/park/fishing access/trailhead/interstates/highways/mile marker, etc.)
  2. The nature of the emergency
  3. Your name
- Keep text messages short, simple and with no abbreviations
- Remain in close contact with your phone and be prepared to answer questions and follow instructions from the 911 operator.
- If safe to do so, remain on scene until help arrives.

**Important tips:**

- Some degree of cellular reception is required to send texts to 911.
- If any other recipients are included in the 911 text, the text message may not be received.
- If you do not receive an initial response from the 911 dispatcher, then contact 911 another way.
- Do NOT text while driving.
- Do NOT text 911 if you are NOT having an emergency. This service is for emergencies only.

