Our nation’s 9-1-1 Communications Centers are being overloaded.

Calls to 9-1-1 increased by 26% in the last decade.

Communications Centers are not keeping up with the increased amount of calls leading to horrible statistics:

15%

The number of calls to 9-1-1 in New Orleans that went unanswered in May, 2011.

1 in 5

The odds of callers being put on hold when dialing 9-1-1 in Fort Worth in the summer of 2005.

1 in 4

The number of mobile phone callers in California who dialed 9-1-1, then hung up in frustration after long waits.

Three of the causes of this problem.

1. With the advent of mobile phones more callers are calling in the same incident overloading Communications Centers with redundant calls.

2. Public Education programs for 9-1-1 are losing phone company and government funding resulting in public expectations that rise above the capabilities of 9-1-1 systems, based on existing resources.

3. Increasingly citizens are calling 9-1-1 when facing non-emergency personal situations and placing an increased demand on the system.

Three things you can do to solve the problem.

1. Make sure that your Communications Center is fully staffed.

2. Fund 9-1-1 public education programs.

3. Ensure that funds collected from carriers, specifically intended to fund 9-1-1 actually reach your local Communications Centers.

“More than 6,000 callers to Austin’s 9-1-1 line received a recorded message instead of a live operator last year, according to the Austin Police Department’s emergency communications manager.”

- Statesman, February 2011

Raise your hand if it’s an emergency.
Effectively Reaching Policy Makers

By George S. Rice, Jr.
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In these troubled times local policy makers are facing tough decisions as municipal and state governments look for ways to cut costs and save money. Emergency response is an essential government service but Communications Center directors still must fight for adequate funding and support to keep up with an ever increasing number of 9-1-1 calls.

This Fact Sheet offers you a quick easy set of points to make when speaking with your local policy makers about key issues affecting 9-1-1. Use this Fact Sheet to ensure that your message is consistent with the voice of thousands of Communications Center directors and others advocating for 9-1-1 around the country. The problem may be national, but the solution will come from people like you speaking out locally.

For more on 9-1-1 overload issues and iCERT’s efforts to address this problem please visit our website, www.TheIndustryCouncil.org where you’ll find the latest on iCERT’s advocacy for 9-1-1 funding and the presentations from our recent workshop on 9-1-1 Overload.

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