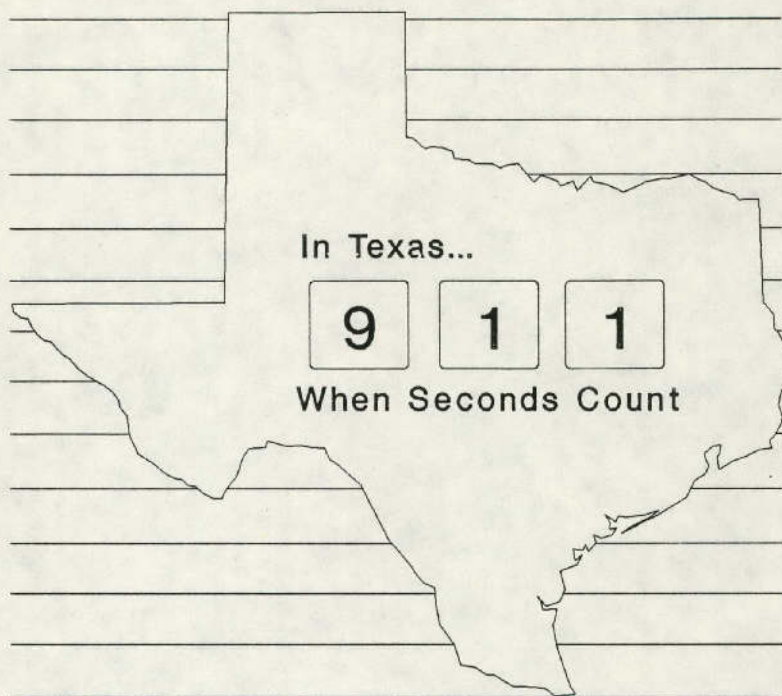


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EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS



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A CITIZEN'S GUIDE

Prepared By
The Advisory Commission On State
Emergency Communications

September 1990



The Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications

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Dear Texas Citizen:

The State of Texas is moving forward towards implementation of statewide 9-1-1. In 1987, the Texas State Legislature passed H.B. 911 (Health and Safety Code, Chapter 771), which formed the Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications (ACSEC). This 17-member Commission is given statewide responsibility to design and implement 9-1-1 emergency telephone systems with an Automatic Number Indicator (ANI) minimum level of service.

H.B. 911 provided that Texas' 24 Councils of Governments, who are regional planners, submit their 9-1-1 Regional Plans to the Commission by September, 1989. The 9-1-1 plans were formulated on a regional basis and included all 254 counties in the state. Although the bill mandated only counties with a population of 120,000 or more to implement service, it also allowed any other county or city to join into the plan by the passage of a resolution of their governing body. On January 10, 1990, ACSEC completed the review and approval of the statewide planning effort. The statewide planning efforts resulted in approximately 95 percent of Texas cities and counties planning and implementing 9-1-1.

In order to eliminate the need for local government funds and high interest rates, the Texas legislature provided for a funding mechanism in the 9-1-1 legislation. This two-tiered funding structure consists of (1) a service fee not to exceed fifty cents (\$.50) per access line based on the cost to implement and operate the planned system; and (2) an equalization surcharge of two-tenths of one percent (0.20%) assessed against intrastate long-distance service. The surcharge is to be used for systems that cannot operate within the \$.50 service fee. Through this legislation Texans can look forward to the day when they will have a more extensive 9-1-1 system statewide that will not financially burden local governments.

9-1-1 provides an easy-to-remember number to dial in case of any emergency, rather than a seven-digit public service agency telephone number. In emergencies, when seconds count, 9-1-1 saves time and lives.

The following provides information on the legislation and on 9-1-1 service in general. Included is a listing of the 9-1-1 Coordinators for each of the Councils of Governments, who can also provide additional information.

Thank you for your interest in the Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications and Public Safety.

9-1-1 TERMS

9-1-1: Always pronounced nine-one-one instead of nine-eleven to avoid possible confusion when dialing the number since there is no number 11 on the dial or pad. Nine-one-one is an easy to remember, easy to dial, three-digit telephone number that provides citizens with a fast, reliable, convenient way to reach fire, police, or medical assistance in the event of an emergency.

EMERGENCY CALL: A call routed to a PSAP reporting an incident, either in progress or just occurred, which presents a potential threat to life or property and requires an immediate response from one or more public safety agency.

PUBLIC SAFETY ANSWERING POINT or PSAP: The agency responsible for initially answering the emergency call and transferring it to the appropriate jurisdiction for handling, if necessary.

PUBLIC SAFETY AGENCY: A public agency or private entity providing fire fighting, police, medical ambulance, or other emergency service.

ADVISORY COMMISSION ON STATE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS (ACSEC): The Commission is responsible for coordinating the implementation of 9-1-1 service statewide. The Commission consists of 17 members: five "ex-officio" members from state agencies who provide expertise relative to public safety and governmental issues and the remainder appointed by the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house. The members include representatives from city and county government, an emergency communications district, and the state's three largest telephone companies.

COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENTS: Twenty-four (24) existing Councils of Governments (COGs) (also referred to as Regional Planning Commissions) that are responsible for planning, implementing and administering 9-1-1 systems in their geographic territory. Please see following pages for a listing of COGs, their regions, and persons to contact for additional information.

REGIONAL PLAN: A plan developed by each Council of Governments (or Regional Planning Commission) which describes how 9-1-1 service will be offered in their multi-county region. The plan includes levels of 9-1-1 service, equipment and operation standards, cost of service, administration, budget, and fund allocation.

BASIC 9-1-1: A system providing dedicated trunk lines which allow direct routing of emergency calls to a public safety answering point. Routing is based on telephone exchange area--not municipal boundaries.

ENHANCED 9-1-1: A system which automatically routes emergency calls to a pre-selected answering point based upon the geographic location from which the call originated. It offers features such as Automatic Number Identification (ANI), Automatic Location Identification (ALI), and Selective Routing (SR). House Bill 911 requires an Automatic Number Identification system as a minimum level of service.

- **Automatic Number Identification or ANI:** The ability to display the telephone number of the phone from which 9-1-1 was dialed. This system is the minimum level of service required under House Bill 911.
- **Automatic Location Identification or ALI:** The ability to display the address of the telephone from which 9-1-1 was dialed.
- **Selective Routing or SR:** This provides automatic routing of the 9-1-1 call to the appropriate public safety answering point without the caller having to make the determination of which public safety agency to call.

DATA BASE: The computerized pre-recorded information or data that includes phone numbers, address information, and call routing information for the citizens covered by an Enhanced 9-1-1 system.

9-1-1 FUNDING STRUCTURE: The two-tiered funding mechanism for financing regional 9-1-1 systems:

- **9-1-1 Emergency Service Fee:** A service fee of up to 50 cents a month per local telephone access line which is based on costs providing 9-1-1 service in a region. This fee is billed only to those customers participating in a regional plan. The local telephone companies collect and remit the fees to the appropriate administration entity after a regional plan has been approved.
- **9-1-1 Equalization Surcharge:** A monthly surcharge on intrastate long-distance services up to one-half of one percent (0.5%) imposed by the Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications. This fee applies to residents in all counties with populations in excess of 120,000 and in all other locations participating in a regional plan. Funds are allocated to the Councils of Governments (or Regional Planning Commission) to assist in the provisions of 9-1-1 service.

The ACSEC has set this surcharge at a rate of two-tenths of one percent (0.2%) effective July, 1988, for residents in counties with populations in excess of 120,000.

Additional locations participating by resolution of their governing bodies are added after Commission approval of a 9-1-1 Regional Plan.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

What does House Bill 911 (Health and Safety Code, Chapter 771), provide? The 70th Legislature of the State of Texas passed House Bill 911 which allows for the planning, financing, and implementation of Enhanced 9-1-1 emergency telephone service in communities throughout the State of Texas.

Are all cities and counties required to implement 9-1-1? No. House Bill 911 only requires counties of 120,000 population or more to have 9-1-1 emergency service by September 1, 1995.

Do I have to commit right now? No. Although it would be helpful for planning and budget purposes to know which locations will be participating in a regional plan, the option will be available at any time.

If a county with less than 120,000 population wants to implement 9-1-1, can they do so under House Bill 911? Yes. A city or county with less than 120,000 population can participate under House Bill 911 by resolution of its governing body.

If we pass this resolution, are we committed to joining a regional 9-1-1 plan? No. Prior to final approval of a 9-1-1 Plan by the Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications (ACSEC), a governing agency that passes a resolution will have another opportunity to decide about continued participation in a regional plan after all the details of a plan are known.

If a city or county government adopts the resolution, will those residents automatically be charged a fee? No, not initially. Residents in counties that participate in the preliminary planning process will not be assessed any fee or surcharge until after a regional plan has been approved by the ACSEC. Local governments will have the opportunity to drop out of a regional plan before any fees or surcharges are assessed.

How are the regional 9-1-1 systems financed? Regional 9-1-1 systems are financed in two ways: a 9-1-1 emergency service fee and a 9-1-1 equalization surcharge.

- **9-1-1 Emergency Service Fee** - Upon approval by the ACSEC of a regional plan, the local telephone companies will collect a monthly service fee of not more than 50 cents per telephone access line. The fee will be based on the actual cost of providing 9-1-1 service in the region. Only telephone customers residing within an area participating in the regional plan and not already paying a 9-1-1 service fee will be assessed the 9-1-1 emergency service fee.

- **9-1-1 Equalization Surcharge** - The ACSEC may impose a monthly surcharge on intrastate long-distance service not to exceed one half of one percent (0.5%). The ACSEC may allocate these funds for equalization assistance to the Regional Planning Commissions (Council of Governments) for use in implementing and operating the regional plan.

Intrastate long-distance customers residing within counties of 120,000 or more population and all locations participating in a regional 9-1-1 plan will be assessed the 9-1-1 equalization surcharge. The ACSEC has set the surcharge at two-tenths of one percent (0.2%) effective July 1, 1988, only for counties with populations in excess of 120,000. Additional locations participating by resolution of their governing bodies will be added after Commission approval of a 9-1-1 plan.

How soon will the billing of these fees begin? After approval by the ACSEC of the 9-1-1 regional plan, the local telephone companies will be notified to begin charging the 9-1-1 Emergency Service Fee.

For counties with populations in excess of 120,000, the 9-1-1 Equalization Surcharge will be effective July 1, 1988. For all other counties and cities joining a regional plan, the surcharge will be assessed after the regional plan has been approved by the ACSEC.

Does a city or county need voter approval to implement 9-1-1 service under House Bill 911? No, only adoption of a resolution is required.

What is a regional plan? House Bill 911 requires each of the 24 Regional Planning Commission (Councils of Governments) to develop a plan for providing 9-1-1 service throughout their geographic territory. The plan should include:

- Levels of 9-1-1 service,
- Equipment and operational standards,
- Cost of service,
- Administration, and
- Budget and fund allocation.

Who is responsible for planning and administering a 9-1-1 Plan? House Bill 911 designates each Regional Planning Commission (Council of Governments) as the agency responsible for developing a 9-1-1 regional plan and submitting it to the ACSEC. Existing emergency communications districts or other agencies may participate in the regional plan's development. Administration of the plan may be by the Regional Planning Commission (Council of Governments), an existing emergency communications district, county, city, or any combination of means as submitted in the regional plan and approved by the ACSEC.

Are there any guidelines for developing the regional 9-1-1 plan? Yes. The 9-1-1 Service Planning Handbook developed by ACSEC provides a guide for the design and implementation of 9-1-1 service.

How will 9-1-1 affect emergency call volumes and staffing requirements? It is unlikely that additional personnel will be required to handle the 9-1-1 call volumes. In most circumstances, the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) which had previously handled emergency calls would probably become the 9-1-1 answering point, therefore utilizing existing personnel.

Will the regional plan cover any necessary remodeling? The 9-1-1 Emergency Service Fee and the 9-1-1 Equalization Surcharge are intended to pay for the costs of 9-1-1 Service. They are not intended to pay for services that presently exist in providing service to individual fire, police, or other emergency services. This means that the fees and surcharge should be used for new service capabilities only. This will not normally include building rearrangements, operating personnel, new radio equipment, and street addressing. If a region is able to include advanced features and street addressing within the maximum 50 cents line charge, the Commission will consider approval.

Can 9-1-1 be established in rural areas, and if so, is it necessary to assign street addresses for these areas? Yes. The minimum level of 9-1-1 service under House Bill 9-1-1 will be the implementation of Automatic Number Identification (ANI). ANI is more cost-effective and does not require rural addressing.

Can 9-1-1 be established in a county served by more than one telephone company? Yes. Telephone companies will work together with city, county, and Councils of Governments' officials to design a 9-1-1 system to serve the area. The phone companies should be included in the initial planning process.

What is the purpose of the Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications (ACSEC)? The purposes of the ACSEC, as outlined in House Bill 911, include:

- Coordination of 9-1-1 service statewide,
- The establishment of guidelines and standards,
- Review and approval of regional plans, and
- Establishment of fees and allocation of revenues.

In addition, the ACSEC will provide advisory services to regional and local authorities.

What type of 9-1-1 service should be implemented? The minimum level of Enhanced 9-1-1 service to be implemented will be Automatic Number identification (ANI). This means the ability to display the telephone number of the phone from which 9-1-1 was dialed.

Should the Regional Planning Commissions (Councils of Governments) be concerned about the issue of liability? Section 771.053 of the Health and Safety Code, Chapter 771 releases the public agency from being held liable for any claim, damage, or loss unless the claim, damage, or loss violates a statute of ordinance.

If a 9-1-1 system is already operational, will it be required to join the regional plan? The existing 9-1-1 districts have the option of joining the regional plan or participating with the Regional Planning Commissions (Council of Governments) in the planning process for the region. Each 9-1-1 district is grandfathered through the legislation, therefore allowing maximum flexibility in meeting the needs at the local levels.

If a county passes a resolution to join the regional plan, does that automatically include the incorporated cities within the county or should they also pass resolutions? No. Each county and incorporated city or town should pass resolutions.

Will the 9-1-1 emergency service fee be the same in all 24 regions? No. The fee cannot exceed 50 cents a month per telephone line, however, the monthly service fee can differ from region to region based on costs of providing 9-1-1 service.

Can a county create its own 9-1-1 district using previous 9-1-1 legislation? No.

Where do I get additional information about the 9-1-1 Program? Call your Regional Planning Commission's (Council of Governments) executive director or 9-1-1 coordinator, or Glenn Roach, Programs Director, Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications in Austin at 512/327-1911.

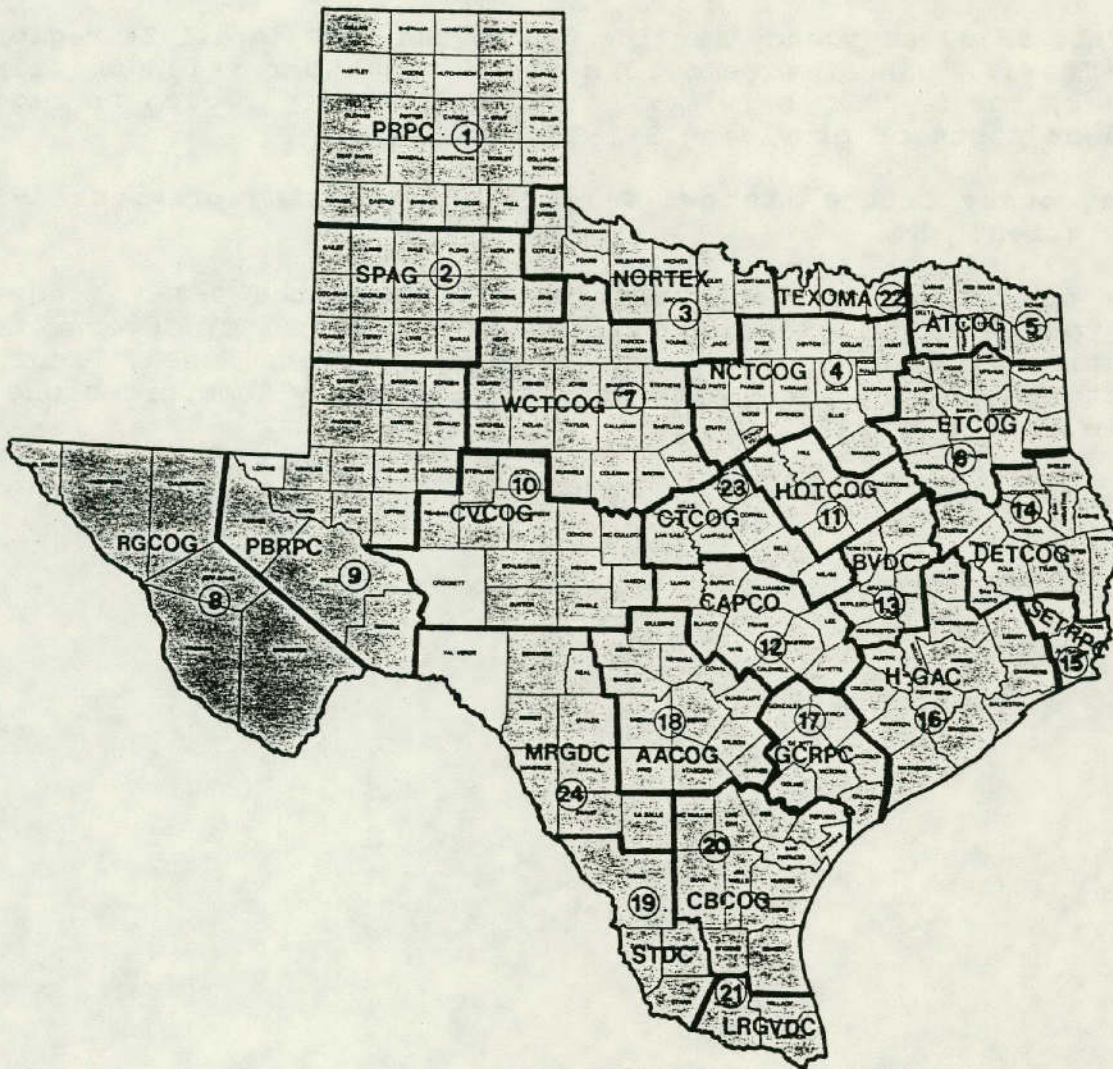
COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENTS

(or Regional Planning Commissions)

The 24 Councils of Governments throughout the State of Texas are responsible for planning, implementing, and administering 9-1-1 systems in their geographic region.

A listing of COG persons to contact for additional information follows.

TEXAS MAP OUTLINING REGIONAL COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENTS



COUNCILS OF GOVERNMENTS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

Mr. Al Notzon
Executive Director
Alamo Area Council of Governments - AACOG
118 Broadway, Suite 400
San Antonio, Texas 78205

Mr. James D. Goerke
Executive Director
Ark-Tex Council of Governments - ATCOG
P. O. Box 5307
Texarkana, Texas 75505

Mr. Glenn J. Cook
Executive Director
Brazos Valley Development Council - BVDC
P. O. Box 4128
Bryan, Texas 77805-4128

Mr. Richard G. Bean
Executive Director
Capital Area Planning Council - CAPCO
2520 South IH-35, Suite 100
Austin, Texas 78704

Mr. A. C. Johnson
Executive Director
Central Texas Council of Governments - CTCOG
P. O. Box 729
Belton, Texas 76513

Mr. John P. Buckner
Executive Director
Coastal Bend Council of Governments - CBCOG
P. O. Box 9909
Corpus Christi, Texas 78469

Mr. Bob Weaver
Executive Director
Concho Valley Council of Governments - CVCOG
P. O. Box 60050
San Angelo, Texas 76906

Mr. Lewis J. Johnson, Jr.
Executive Director
Deep East Texas Council of Governments - DETCOG
403 College Street
Jasper, Texas 75951

9-1-1 COORDINATORS

Mr. Nolan Suarez
(512) 225-5201

Mr. John Basile
(214) 832-8636

Ms. Anita Pitt
(409) 776-2277

Mr. Manny Fernandez
(512) 443-7653

Mr. Jim Oborski
(817) 939-1801

Ms. Jay Nelson
(512) 883-5743

Ms. Hilda Arredondo
(915) 944-9666

Mr. Norman Hoff
(409) 384-7282

Mr. Glynn Knight
Executive Director
East Texas Council of Governments - ETCOG
Stoneridge Plaza Office Bldg.
3800 Stone Road
Kilgore, Texas 75662

Mr. Gary Price

(214) 984-8641

Mr. Pat Kennedy
Executive Director
Golden Crescent Regional
Planning Commission - GCRPC
P. O. Box 2028
Victoria, Texas 77902

Mr. Robert Kirk

(512) 578-1587

Mr. Hugh Davis
Executive Director
Heart of Texas Council
of Governments - HOTCOG
300 Franklin
Waco, Texas 76701-2297

Ms. Elaine Lewin

(817) 756-7822

Mr. Jack Steele
Executive Director
Houston-Galveston Area Council - HGAC
P. O. Box 22777
Houston, Texas 77227-9972

Ms. Susan Bortzfield

(713) 627-3200

Mr. Robert Chandler
Executive Director
Lower Rio Grande Valley
Development Council - LRGVDC
4900 North 23rd Street
McAllen, Texas 78504

Ms. Janie Martinez

(512) 682-3481

Mr. Mike Patterson
Executive Director
Middle Rio Grande
Development Council - MRGDC
P. O. Box 1199
Carrizo Springs, Texas 78834

Mr. Ramon Johnston

(512) 876-3533

Mr. Dennis Wilde
Executive Director
Nortex Regional Planning Commission - NRPC
P. O. Box 5144
Wichita Falls, Texas 76307

Ms. Lamerle Glidewell

(817) 322-5281

Mr. William Pitstick
Executive Director
North Central Texas
Council of Governments - NCTCOG
P. O. Drawer COG
Arlington, Texas 76005

Mr. Ben North

(817) 640-3300

Mr. Gary Pitner
Executive Director
Panhandle Regional
Planning Commission - PRPC
P. O. Box 9257
Amarillo, Texas 79105-9257

Ms. Pamela Nielsen

(806) 372-3381

Mr. Ernie Crawford
Executive Director
Permian Basin Regional
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Midland, Texas 79711-0191

Mr. Harley Reeves

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Mr. Justin Ormsby
Executive Director
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1014 North Stanton, Suite 100
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Mr. Percy Greene

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Mr. Don Kelly
Executive Director
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P. O. Drawer 1387
Nederland, Texas 77626

Mr. Bob Dickinson

(409) 727-2384

Mr. Jerry Casstevens
Executive Director
South Plains Association
of Governments - SPAG
P. O. Box 3730
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Lubbock, Texas 79452

Mr. Mike Pedigo

(806) 762-8721

Mr. Amando Garza
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South Texas Development Council - STDC
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Laredo, Texas 78044-2187

Ms. Julie Saldana

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Ms. Frances Pelley
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Texoma Regional Planning Commission - TRPC
10000 Grayson Drive
Denison, Texas 75020

Mr. Art Olson

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Mr. Brad Helbert
Executive Director
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Ms. Sue Smith

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