

# 9-1-1 Caller

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## 9-1-1: Building Bridges to Ethnic Communities

By Velia Williams

The 1991 NENA (National Emergency Number Association) Educational Program Committee offered an outstanding selection of topics, many in keeping with this year's conference theme, *9-1-1, A New Era*. Two topics in particular are new to NENA's arena of discussions: accessibility to the speech- and hearing-impaired community and concerns of minority groups with regard to 9-1-1.

Public service providers are acutely aware of the need to learn and implement changes in the methods of delivering emergency telephone service due to technological advancements, rules and regulations that govern programs, and operating procedures that are critical to the success of any emergency communications office. Just as important is the need to continue to educate the public and improve the service given to the individual who calls 9-1-1.

One of the program topics offered at NENA focused on the African-American, Asian, and Hispanic communities in Texas and how public service providers might better address their needs and concerns. Ethnic groups not only offer rich cultures and languages, but present differences that must be learned and understood.

Nancy Branson with the Tarrant County 9-1-1 District served as moderator for "Minority Concerns and 9-1-1." Ms. Branson did an outstanding job in directing the discussion, citing responses

received to a poll she had conducted on emergency response service. Almost all polled indicated there is a lack of understanding of ethnic culture, rudeness is often sensed when oral communication fails, and a sense that an emergency is not treated with priority simply because of where it originates.

Mr. Juan Rangel (consultant for non-profit organizations and private corporations), Ms. Wynntress Ware (President and owner of Wynntress Ware and Associates), and Mr. Andrew Burt (Haltom City Police Department) served as panelists. Through their work in the public and private sector and close ties with their communities, they provided insights into cultural differences and suggested how relationships and public education efforts could be improved.

Some members of ethnic groups exhibit the following characteristics: language barriers (multi-dialects, grammar, and mispronunciations; children used as interpreters when household head cannot speak English); fear/mistrust (police often seen in aggressive role and sometimes called as a last resort; children afraid they may be taken away and separated from family); and social and community characteristics (because of religious beliefs, minority may first wait for prayers to be answered; some ethnic

*Continued on page 2*



*In Texas, When Seconds Count . . .*





# ACSEC at the PUC

By Joe Kirk



The ACSEC is currently an active intervenor in six dockets at the Public Utility Commission, and we are working with three telephone companies to try to come to agreement on their proposed 9-1-1 tariffs before they are filed with the PUC.

We remain cautiously optimistic that we will be able to come to some sort of stipulated settlement in Docket No. 9667, GTE's 9-1-1 tariff case. This case is almost one year old, and both we and the Company would like to have it over with so we can get on with other tasks.

Dockets No. 9979 and 9981, United's and Centel's rate cases, are considerably different than what we are normally involved in. Our presence in these cases is just to ensure that the interests of the 9-1-1 community are represented, if necessary.

As you have no doubt become aware, the proposed Telecommunications Serv-

ice Priority System (better known as TSP) presents the 9-1-1 community with a real dilemma. We have telephone circuits which will need priority restoration in the event of a disaster, but we sure do not have extra funds to buy that priority. Plus, we thought that was part of what we were buying when we contracted with our telcos for 9-1-1 service.

Dockets No. 10094 and 10109, Southwestern Bell's and GTE's TSP tariff cases, seek to establish both non-recurring and monthly rates for assigning and maintaining emergency restoration priorities. It should be noted that our argument in these cases is not necessarily with the telephone companies. They are following the directions of federal authorities. We are working diligently with the telephone companies and with both state and federal agencies in seeking a satisfactory resolution to the problems involved with the TSP program.

Docket No. 10167 was filed by GTE to establish rates for 9-1-1 ena-

bling modifications to electromechanical central office switches that will not be replaced with digital switches before implementation of the 9-1-1 systems. Only those switches where 9-1-1 implementation is due during the first three quarters of 1991 are involved in this docket, but follow-on cases will deal with the remaining switches, as the need arises. We are trying to have this docket handled as expeditiously as possible, so as not to delay cutover of systems.

We are working with Centel, United, and Sugar Land telephone companies on their proposed 9-1-1 tariffs prior to them being filed at the PUC. This is the ideal way to handle these tariffs. It is much easier to resolve difficult questions privately than it is after the proposals are filed and docketed.

*If any of you have any questions, or suggestions relating to any of these dockets, we would be pleased to hear from you. Our intent is to represent your concerns at the PUC, and we welcome your input.*

## *Ethnic Communities, from page 1*

communities do not understand the geographic boundaries of public safety; gang crimes are usually committed against own people; close knit community will take care of problems within).

Suggestions offered for educating ethnic communities and improving relations include using a soft marketing approach to promote public relations; explaining what "9-1-1" is all about; using cultural designs, colors, etc., on public education materials; inviting police to visit communities when they are not in an aggressive role; enlisting community leaders to provide input into 9-1-1 education programs; participating in community activities; providing training to communications personnel and public relations training for officers; and promoting customer service.

Clearly, linguistic and cultural differences within the growing Asian and Hispanic communities in Texas make it necessary for 9-1-1 to develop creative ways of presenting its public service messages. Social, economic, and political problems are common in most communities and one must be aware and sensitive to issues and particular concerns of individual ethnic groups. It takes genuine interest and time to build relationships based on trust and compassion.

Other thoughts that come to mind that would benefit community relations are recruitment efforts to attract minorities into public service. Questions such as: What can be done to promote job opportunities in public service and emergency communications? How can

minority applicants be actively recruited into public service? What special training in ethnic relations can be developed and provided to public service personnel? What kinds of partnerships and contracting opportunities with ethnic communities are available?

I would encourage public safety and emergency communications professionals to identify the ethnic populations in their areas and enlist the aid of the community leaders to assist in public education and emergency communications campaigns. Another worthwhile effort to consider would be the development of a task force to address ethnic relations and 9-1-1. *Please direct any comments to Velia Williams at the ACSEC offices.*



# TDD Communications Etiquette

By Toni Dunne



By now, many of you are familiar with the term TDD, the acronym for Telecommunications Device for the Deaf. Are you also aware of the term TTY, derived from the old teletype machine?

TDD and TTY are now interchangeable acronyms used to identify the equipment which electronically transmits messages through the telephone line. Another term is "Text Telephone." There are many different models with different features and options, however, the "protocol" (etiquette) between users has become standard.

## Critical Considerations

The most critical consideration is first recognizing that a Hearing- or Speech-Impaired person is calling! Mishandling of TDD calls is common, usually by hanging up on the TDD Caller.

There are four ways you can identify Hearing- or Speech-Impaired callers: 1) Silence, 2) TDD tones, 3) a synthesized voice announcement, and 4) a RELAY TEXAS agent announcement. The PSAP is directly connected with the caller for the first three situations. When a person uses RELAY TEXAS to make an emergency call, a third party serves as a communication conduit. [See "Responding to Emergency Calls From RELAY TEXAS" in the May/June (1991) issue of the *9-1-1 Caller*, p. 9].

## TDD Abbreviations

There is a specific etiquette when using TDD's. The abbreviations "GA" and "SK" are the most important in a TDD conversation. "GA" is the signal for the other person to "Go Ahead," to

begin typing. "SK" means "Signing off" or "Stop Keying." This shows that you will hang up, that you have nothing more to say. It is polite to type "Thank you," "Bye," or some other closing before you type "SK." Both parties must type "SK" back to back before hanging up.

## Hints

- \* Do not use punctuation (except "Q" for question).
- \* Skip several spaces between sentences.
- \* Do not backspace excessively to make corrections.
- \* Minor typo's are "okay" if you can understand the word.
- \* Make corrections by typing an "XXXX." Skip a space and retype the word.
- \* Repeat critical information such as addresses.
- \* Give visual assurance with calming words.
- \* Inform the caller of what you are doing (i.e., "Sending police" or "Connecting with Fire Department.")
- \* Type "..." to let the caller know that you are still on the line.
- \* Type "Pls Stay on the line" instead of "Stand by."

You may occasionally experience technical difficulties that appear as an unclear message -- such as a string of numbers and/or letters that are undecipherable. Don't immediately assume that your TDD is broken. This could be the result of a noisy telephone line due to weather, or TDD user error, such as fingers placed on the wrong keys. Inform the caller.

An example of how to handle this situation would be to type "NBR5 ONLY

PLS REPEAT" or "GARBLE CANT READ TRY AGAIN GA." In the event that the problem cannot be resolved, continue to inform the caller of what you are doing, such as "SENDING POLICE" or "HELP ON THE WAY."

Remember, TDD calls take longer than voice calls. Be patient. ASL (American Sign Language) is a visual language with unique structure and syntax. It is difficult to put into typed format. Your caller could be a person attempting to communicate in a second language -- English.

Although your PSAP may have a TDD, it is inappropriate to tell the TDD user to call back in a relay (RELAY TEXAS) situation. If you have any questions, contact Toni Dunne at 512-327-1911.



Below, you will find a comprehensive listing of abbreviations that may be used in TDD/TTY communications: Although they are accepted and speed up the communication process, all but "GA" and "SK" are optional.

GA	"Go Ahead" (your turn to type)
GA to SK	Completing all messages and getting ready to hang up (or GA SK)
SK	"Stop Keying" (end of conversation)
SKSK	Hanging Up
Q	Question mark
XXXX	Erasing the error -- (letting caller know you are still on line)
PLS	Please
U	You
UR	Your
NBR	Number (also NU)





# PSAP Staffing for 9-1-1

By Helen Sommers

Will my staffing needs change when 9-1-1 goes on line?

This is one of the commonly asked questions during planning and development of 9-1-1 systems throughout Texas. Answers will vary. While there are several factors to consider, population is the major one which will affect the decision.

Staffing needs should not change in those areas where there is a small population and low traffic volume. The staff which handles existing emergency communication operations before the system goes on line will probably be the same individuals who will answer 9-1-1 calls. For larger populations, staffing requirements may differ, and may require an increase in staff to handle the incoming 9-1-1 calls.

Another consideration should be given to those systems that are designed with a single answering point, where calls terminated at several locations prior to 9-1-1. In some cases, calls for law enforcement, fire, and EMS will all be answered (though probably not dispatched) at a single location.

It is very common to expect a call volume increase the first six weeks your 9-1-1 system goes on line. After the system has been tried by citizens who are just curious, the call volume should settle to a normal level of emergency calls within your counties and cities.

A third area which should be considered is the Automatic Number Identification (ANI) which displays the caller's telephone number. Call takers will now have a number to call back in cases of

hangup calls and disconnected calls, when there is no voice contact prior to disconnection. In these situations, 30-40 seconds will be spent placing these call backs. During times of peak call volume, adequate coverage should be maintained.

SRI International has published a manual titled *The Design and Costing of 911 Systems: A Technical Manual*, prepared for the Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. This manual provides information in computing the number of call answerers per shift. If you are uncertain of staffing requirements, this information will make it easier to determine the staffing needs for your PSAP.

# TCLEOSE Training in AACOG

The Law Enforcement Academy at the Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG) recently conducted two **Basic Telecommunications Operator Certification** courses. These courses comply with the basic training requirements of the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) and Rule 211.105.

Classes were held May 28 through

June 7, at the Atascosa Sheriff's Office in Jourdanton, where 27 enrollees were certified. At the Boerne Fire Department, an additional 17 were certified, after completion of classes held June 3 through June 14.

Courses covered areas relating to calls and inquiries that are common to telecommunications/dispatchers, as well as issues regarding jail, fire, and EMS considerations. First priority was given

to agencies that are part of the AACOG regional 9-1-1 system.

The course offerings were a success and AACOG plans to offer them again in early fall. Bryan Couch, 9-1-1 Coordinator for Atascosa County and an attendee, said the "training, as well as the content, were very suitable and timely." Atascosa County is scheduled to cut over to 9-1-1 this summer.

## Paper Maps Available from Census

Any county that would like to receive a set of paper maps from the Census Bureau TIGER Line should contact the ACSEC immediately. An order is being placed and your regional council of governments will know if you are on the order list. Return time and other details will be communicated as they become known.

The ACSEC also has information about how you can obtain the TIGER Line Files on CD-ROM or 9-track tape.

## Upcoming Meetings on Addressing and Information Management

Three upcoming meetings will have information available:

**Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (URISA)**  
29th Annual Conference  
August 10-15, 1991 San Francisco, CA  
202-289-1685

**Associated Public-Safety Communications Officers, Inc. (APCO)**  
57th Public Safety Communications Conference & Exposition  
August 11-16, 1991 Tulsa, OK  
800-824-1850

**Texas Association of Regional Councils (TARC)**  
26th Annual Conference  
September 25-28, 1991 Odessa, TX  
512-478-4715



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# Foundation Funding in the Golden Crescent

By Robbie Kirk, Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission

In implementing E9-1-1 statewide, some of the Regional Planning Commissions/Councils of Governments are fortunate enough to encompass an area with a strong population base, thus enabling them to accumulate greater service revenue. On the other hand, a few of us did not have the numbers to meet the state-mandated requirements of Automatic Number Identification (ANI), much less Automatic Location Identification (ALI) and its inherent need for rural addressing.

The Victoria-based Golden Crescent area always wanted ANI, ALI, and Selective Routing (SR). However, we also knew we could not afford the whole package on our own. At the suggestion of a local 9-1-1 Advisory Committee member, Golden Crescent Regional Planning Commission (GCRPC) decided to pursue alternative financing to supplement 9-1-1 service fee and 9-1-1 surcharge revenues.

Locally, this area is most fortunate to have the M.G. & Lillie A. Johnson Foundation, Inc. The Foundation has been helping local health-related and medical education causes for some years. They have purchased ambulances and rescue units, provided monies to establish endowment funds at local colleges, purchased medical equipment and assisted with capital improvements at local hospitals. The point here is two-fold: 1) the Foundation's interest is health-related (E9-1-1!) and 2) they are local.

For those who wish for more than their budget will allow, foundation and grant funding are alternatives that worked for us. To date, we have secured grants totaling \$101,000 -- \$81,000 from the Johnson Foundation, and \$20,000 from the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation (SDHPT). These monies are going to be used exclusively for rural addressing. Rural addressing is something we needed for an

ALI system, and was something we could not afford on our own.

The keys to obtaining foundation and grant monies are the right funding sources and having a specific goal in mind for those funds. Do not ask a foundation for 9-1-1 related particulars, when their impetus is on the Arts and Humanities. Again, know what you want. Asking for money for 9-1-1 is like asking for money for Education -- the picture is too big. Be specific, and have some dollar figures in mind. Finally, utilize all your resources. We found out about the SDHPT funds while reading the *EMS Messenger*, late on a Friday afternoon.

Some sources that come to mind are the Foundation Directory, the Directory of Texas Foundations, and the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance. All three publications list a foundation or program by their field of interest. They also tell you how to solicit their funds, and in some cases, how much money is available. The whole process takes time. One more word of advice, foundations hate form letters. Be personable, but brief and to the point.

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## 9-1-1 Day Around the Corner!

By Carey Spence



On Wednesday, September 11, 1991, ACSEC will host the celebration for the third annual 9-1-1 Day in Texas.

The intent of this event is to pay tribute to the professionals who serve their communities as public safety telecommunicators and recognize the establishment of 9-1-1 service throughout the state of Texas.

The ACSEC Public Education Committee is currently planning the day's activities and seeking nominations for this year's awards. An evaluation committee will make the selection for this year's recipients of the telecommunicator award.

Dispatchers, call takers, record keepers, telecommunicators and others who work for law enforcement, fire, emergency medical service, highway maintenance departments, civil defense,

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forestry and communications on state and local levels provide a vital link between the individual who telephones for help and the agencies that respond.

Individuals who have made a significant contribution to the field of public safety telecommunications are the types sought for nomination.

ACSEC has conducted a mailing throughout the state requesting nominations. If you would like to nominate an individual for this award, please contact ACSEC.

A committee has been formed to seek donations for this year's events. Ross Sherohman, of DETCOG, will head the committee, and ideally regional representatives will contribute to the success of 9-1-1 Day.













## Names in the News

Houston-Galveston Area Council welcomes **Pat Chisum** to their 9-1-1 project as a 9-1-1 PSAP Specialist. Pat will work with the PSAP agencies from the first PSAP visit through call-taker refresher training. He has experience in telecommunications, emergency communications, and is certified as an instructor by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officers Standards and Education (TCLEOSE).

**Steve Smith** has been named 9-1-1 Director for the Deep East Texas Council of Governments (DETCOG). "After coming on board with DETCOG in March, it didn't take long to realize the many duties that I'd be involved in," says Steve. Some of those duties include

coordinating telephone companies with city and county officials in implementing 9-1-1 in the region.

Steve has lived in the DETCOG region for 32 years and sees the present position as his most challenging to date. Yet he finds the work enjoyable.

The Panhandle Region 9-1-1 community has a new staff person in **Daniel Odneal**. As a Program Specialist, Daniel assists in the implementation and ongoing operations of 9-1-1 systems throughout the 24-county area within the Panhandle Region Planning Commission (PRPC) network.

A lifetime resident of the area, Daniel says he is "proud to be involved in bringing the citizens of the Panhandle

the benefits of 9-1-1 service." He has an Associates degree from Amarillo College and feels his background in computer information systems should be beneficial in his new position.

**Carey Spence**, of ACSEC, has been appointed to chair the Public Awareness Committee for the National Emergency Number Association. Her one-year term begins immediately.

**Mike Pedigo**, formerly with the South Plains Association of Governments (SPAG), has accepted the position of executive director of the Denco Area 9-1-1 District. He brings several years of experiences in telecommunications, including his work with the White House Communications Agency.

## ACSEC Holds Workshop

By Vander E. Phelps

Contrary to the beliefs of some of our less-informed lay friends, implementation of 9-1-1 in a community can be a drawn-out and sometimes tedious process. No one knows that better than the thousands of volunteers, service providers, elected officials, councils of governments coordinators, and the ACSEC commission and staff who are involved in the state-wide effort.

With that thought in mind, the ACSEC staff has held a series of informative workshops over the last two and a half years to assist with the planning and implementation process of 9-1-1. Feedback from these sessions has been very positive, and they have proved to be a rewarding experience for participants, as well as attendees.

In the tropical setting of the Embassy Suites Hotel in North Austin, an implementation workshop was held recently for 9-1-1 coordinators in councils of governments throughout Texas. Speakers and presenters included serv-

ice providers, along with representatives from the Public Utility Commission, the Attorney General's Office, and the ACSEC staff.

The first day began in the afternoon, to allow for travel. Regional meetings were held, followed by a meeting of the Emergency and Health Coordinators Association chaired by Jill Hyde of the Brazos Valley Development Council.

On the following day, the approximately 65-70 in attendance listened to presentations on the ACSEC staff roles and responsibilities, followed by the ACSEC reporting mechanisms, both performance and financial. Carey Spence (ACSEC staff) led an interesting discussion on public education issues, followed by legal issues as discussed by Scott McCollough of the AG's Office. A highlight of the day was a TDD (Telecommunications Device for the Deaf) workshop conducted by Toni Dunne, formerly with the Texas Commission

for the Deaf, and now with ACSEC.

A panel discussion on TSP (telecommunications service priority) was the lead offering on the final day, followed by talks on addressing and MSAG (master street address guide) development.

Implementation issues and concerns took up the next portion of the agenda. Lastly, telephone company issues (billing, equipment, central office conversions, inter-lata network, boundary overlaps) were given attention by Pam Horne of Southwestern Bell, Mark Brown of GTE, and Joe Kirk of ACSEC.

The workshop proved to be a successful exchange of ideas as well as a reprieve from the daily routine. The ACSEC thanks all who attended and participated in the events, especially those who shared years of gained wisdom from personal experience.

For further information on any of the topics mentioned, contact the ACSEC.



# Immediate Success

## NCTCOG Counties Cutover

It didn't take long for the citizens of Collin and Rockwall Counties to realize that 9-1-1 would be a success in their communities. Both systems, part of the 9-1-1 network in the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), were tested shortly after going on line.

### Collin

Police were responding to a call in Collin County just minutes after the system began operating. The call had been placed by a little girl at a coin phone. She called because of a family disturbance in which the mother was being assaulted by a knife-wielding father.

The child either hung up or was forced to hang up the phone. Because of the 9-1-1 system's address location database, police were able to determine the origin of the call and respond quickly, thereby possibly saving the mother's life. The woman was immediately rushed to a local hospital.

City Administrator Lloyd Behm said that without 9-1-1, police would not have been able to determine where the call had come from.

### Rockwall

In Rockwall, volunteer firemen responded to a call to rescue a man who had been trapped under an overturned tractor. Karen Riggs, an employee in the County Treasurer's Office, dialed 9-1-1 on its first day of operation.

William Riggs, Karen's father-in-law, had been trapped under his tractor for almost 24 hours. When he was freed by firemen, Riggs was rushed to Lake Pointe Medical Center, and later by Care Flight to Baylor Medical Center, in Dallas.

Says Karen, "9-1-1 works."

# Spotlight: Ross Sherohman

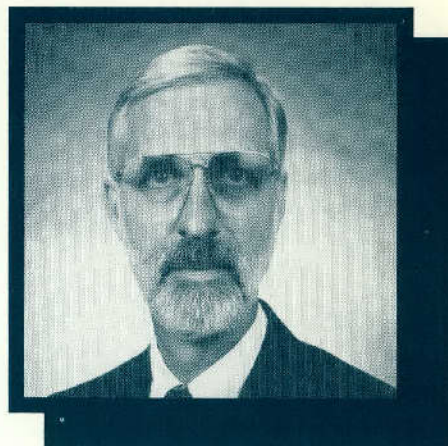
J. Ross Sherohman, an adopted East Texan, is a technical advisor for the Regional 9-1-1 Emergency Number System of the Deep East Texas Council of Governments. He serves members of the community in establishing the national public safety calling number and coordinating, as a Program Assistant, the regional 12-county mapping and rural project.

A licensed state of Texas peace officer since 1965, and retired from the Harris County Sheriff's Department, Ross has served as a deputy sheriff in the Houston area working as a Detective, Patrol Supervisor, and lead Communications Dispatcher for several years. In East Texas since 1980, he has worked for the Texas Department of Public Safety in police Communications specialties, and for the Nacogdoches County Sheriff's Department as a Deputy and Communications Coordinator.

An adjunct instructor for the East Texas Police Academy in Kilgore, Texas, Ross has many years of experience in public safety education, specializing in telecommunications, dispatching and law enforcement systems operations. Many regional public safety members actively seek his resource in today's complex electronic environment.

Ross was awarded the first certification in Texas as a Telecommunicator when the State requirement was established by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officer Standards and Education (TCLEOSE) during the mid-1980s. He holds an Advanced Peace Officer Certification in Texas, National certification as an instructor for the Associated Public Safety Communication Officers National Training Program, and many other state and national Public Safety training acknowledgements, including the National Automobile Theft Bureau.

Presently, Ross serves the ACSEC



as an active member of the Public Education and Training Committee, and the Rural Addressing and Mapping Committee. He has been an active supporter of 9-1-1 for Texans since 1982, and he and his wife, Judy, a native of Nacogdoches, remain committed to bringing the best services possible for all residents of East Texas.

Ross' memberships include the Sheriff's Association of Texas, APCO, NENA, East Texas Peace Officers Association, Nacogdoches County Peace Officers Association, Emergency Telecommunicators Association, North Texas Telecommunicators Association, Sigma Delta Chi Professional Journalism Society, Delta Chi Fraternity, Beta Sigma Phi (Honorary), Kentucky Colonels, Kappa Alpha Mu (Professional Photographers Society), Humane Society of Nacogdoches County, Audubon Society, Texas Criminal Justice Information Users Group, Anoka County Association for the Retarded, and Slippery Rock Boosters International. He is also a member of the Rotary Club International, Life Insurance Management Association, Public Relations Society of America, and American Universities Public Relations Society. Recently, he was also named to the editorial board of the *9-1-1 Magazine*.





## Addressing Article in APCO Bulletin

The June 1991 Associated Public-Safety Communications Officers (APCO) offers some insight into the role of the United States Postal Service in a rural addressing project.

In an article written by Philip A. Pensabene, in the Office of Address Information Systems at the US Postal Service Headquarters in Washington, D.C. the information flow between the local addressing agency and the Postal Service for rural conversion is described.

Along with this, there are some general guidelines listed so the reader can determine what a "good address is NOT."

The US Postal Service is willing to work with your local addressing coordinator. If you are involved in an addressing project and have not yet contacted the Postal Service, please do so.

## 9-1-1 to the Rescue

### High-Tech maps will facilitate quick response



John Cantrell has a new job with Collin County that allows him to sharpen a skill he learned as a boy 30 years ago -- drawing

with Etch-A-Sketch.

Etch-A-Sketch. For grown-ups.

Five days a week, the former land surveyor sits at a computer terminal and starts to draw.

But instead of turning two dials to create a squiggly picture, Mr. Cantrell uses a computer mouse. Holding the mouse in his right hand, he slowly traces lines on a map to transfer them electronically to the computer screen.

For at least the next four months, Mr. Cantrell's job will be to help drafters with Texas Aerial Surveys in Addison produce almost 300 maps in this fashion. It will take him until September or so to complete the maps, which he will use to locate and identify every habitable building in the county and give it an address.

All this is to help police, firefighters, and ambulance drivers locate residents who call for help using the first county-wide emergency 911 system. The 911 system officially begins operating Monday.

"I'm having fun with it. It's a change for me," Mr. Cantrell said of the process. "It's just computer drafting."

County Facilities Manager Glen Renfro said Mr. Cantrell began the process about a month ago using a 1985 county map and aerial photographs of the county taken in 1988.

Once Mr. Cantrell completes the computer mapping process, he will use the updated maps to identify "every road in the county ... and every structure in the county," Mr. Renfro said.

"When we get finished with it, it will be a computerized map," said Brian Patterson of Texas Aerial Surveys.

In addition to every street and driveway in the county, the computer-generated maps will identify creeks, lakes and ponds that emergency officials will use as landmarks, said Mr. Cantrell.

Mr. Renfro said the actual search for buildings in the county can't begin until the maps are complete -- perhaps in October or November.

"It may be sooner," he said.

Mr. Cantrell will begin his search "where the biggest problems are, around the Lake Lavon area."

Texas Aerial Surveys owner John Sifuentes said he received the \$90,000 contract to compile the maps in March. Once every habitable building in the county has been identified and given an address, which could take years, Mr. Sifuentes said the updated maps will be compiled into a book.

Mr. Sifuentes said the county tax assessor-collector and the appraisal district could also use the book of maps to help find scofflaws.

"It's basically a 911 Mapsco," he said.

**Re-printed with permission from the Dallas Morning News.**

**Note: The Collin County 9-1-1 system went on-line June 3, 1991.**



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# ACSEC Adopts Addressing Guidelines

After an eight-month study, addressing recommendations were adopted by the ACSEC and will be published in the upcoming revised *Addressing Handbook for Local Governments*. The ACSEC created a statewide advisory panel for the purpose of developing addressing guidelines which could be used by cities and counties alike in establishing street addresses. Their action resulted from regional councils requesting the ACSEC to help on behalf of their counties.

The ACSEC would like to thank all of the members of the Addressing Advisory Subcommittee for their work in achieving this goal. We would also like to thank the numerous vendors and other attendees who were very helpful in the

give-and-take sessions with the committee members. The members of the subcommittee are as follows:

Bill Munn, Committee Chair, Tarrant County 9-1-1 District; Rob Aanstoos, Texas Water Commission; Jim Brandes, Alamo Area COG; Mark Brown, GTE; Martha Castillo, Lower Rio Grande COG; Doug Clough, Greater Harris County 9-1-1 District; Jim Copeland, State Department of Highways and Public Transportation; Horace Groff, Grayson County; Pam Horne, Southwestern Bell Telephone; John Lucas, United Telephone; Kim Ludecke, Texas Natural Resources Information System; and Trudy Messick, United States Postal Service.

Also, Bob O'Neal, North Central Texas COG; Beth Ozanich, Tarrant County 9-1-1 District; Jim Ray, Texas Association of Regional Councils; Gene Weatherall, Texas Department of Health; Jim Wetzel, CONTEL; and Leon Wilhite, State Property Tax Board.

Whether organized by county administrator, appraisal district, or other body, these guidelines can help each county develop an addressing project successfully. The recommendations can be acquired separately prior to the publishing date of the handbook. The ACSEC staff is available for public workshops, should a county desire assistance.

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## NENA Addressing Sessions

For anyone who is curious about addressing, the 1991 NENA conference in Dallas was the place to be in June. With four panel sessions devoted to the benefits of addressing, who to consult when addressing, and database considerations in maintaining addresses, attendees got a smorgasbord of information.

Questions from the audience led one to believe that one of the most valuable resources to newcomers was without a doubt the experience gained and the good work done by Texas counties which have addressed. Both the mistakes and the innovations are of interest to those just starting to address.

For instance, where does a county begin to acquire a list of addresses? Starting "at home," check with the voter registration office and the taxing office. Follow up with the post office for a carrier route list or an extract of

such. Some telephone companies will pull an indefinite address customer list for use.

The appeal for consistency was voiced from both counties as well as telephone companies in issues such as number assignment and display for post office use. While not uniformly applied and a source of sometime frustration, post office assistance is still essential to ensuring addressing success.

The sheer number of choices facing a county can stymie a county's progress in addressing. Many counties are concerned that they get their money's worth when acquiring maps and geographic information systems (GIS). A vendor's word of advice is to buy the minimum system needed for your application(s) and insist on the ability to reasonably build and integrate for the future.

The current use and potential value

of Census TIGER Line maps was further confirmed by vendors, notwithstanding the corrections necessary to verify some street locations and names.

The vendor's exhibit hall offered several new and not-so-new mapping and address assignment programs that displayed global positioning systems (satellite), mapping and Computer Aided Dispatch integration, and automatic vehicle location. A newly-discovered use of integration at this conference was the remarkable ability of the U.S. Customs drug-search dog to unearth drug-tainted money that potentially could be used for addressing support.

The ACSEC does keep a current addressing and mapping vendor list, available on request. In addition, individuals can be referred to anyone interested in contacting addressed counties.





# Mail Call

Your feedback is important to us. We like to know what you think, and what you want to read, so that we can continue to meet your information needs. Any comments you have, or writing you wish to submit dealing with 9-1-1 is welcomed.

To submit articles, story ideas, pictures, letters, or suggestions on how we can improve this newsletter and better serve your emergency communications

needs, please address all correspondence to Vander Phelps, 9-1-1 Caller, Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications, 1101 Capital of Texas, Suite B-100, Austin, Texas 78746. Include your address with all submissions.

ACSEC reserves the right to edit, clarify, and condense all submissions. Every effort will be made to stay true to the author's intent and purpose.



9-1-1 Caller is a publication of the Advisory Commission on State Emergency Communications.

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