



WHAT TO DO WHEN THE POWER GOES OUT

During an extended power outage, a corded (traditional) phone will usually keep working. If it doesn't, the best way to help yourself is by being prepared before the outage. The following are a few simple steps.

- Install a UPS (uninterrupted power supply) unit on your home computer for VoIP connectivity. Doing this may buy some VoIP time, but a UPS is temporary and may not last until power is restored.
- Keep cordless phone batteries charged at all times.
- Keep wireless phones fully charged.



STEPS TO GET EMERGENCY HELP

Even if the VoIP service provider can automatically provide the callback phone number and address, help may still be delayed if the 9-1-1 center doesn't have the right information. Verify with the 9-1-1 call taker that the address they have for you is your physical address, not your billing address.

- Listen carefully to the 9-1-1 call taker, providing the correct address when asked.
- Follow up any address change with your VoIP service provider.
- If traveling with a laptop computer, contact your service provider to find out how your VoIP service works.

CAUTION

VoIP SUBSCRIBERS

A 9-1-1 call made with VoIP phone service may not bring the assistance that you need.



Produced by

CALIFORNIA 9-1-1 EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE

WWW.TD.DGS.CA.GOV/SERVICES/911

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Not all Voice over Internet Protocol (**VoIP**) service providers automatically provide enhanced 9-1-1 information (name, address and callback number), which means police, fire or emergency medical personnel may not be sent to the right address when using a VoIP phone service.

- **Even if a VoIP phone is programmed to call 9-1-1, the call may not route to the correct answering center.**
- **The call may be directed to a non-emergency number and not be given the same answering priority as a 9-1-1 call.**
- **The name, address and call-back phone number may not be provided to the answering center. If the caller is unable to speak, help may not be sent.**



DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU!

A family member at home suddenly drops to the floor, unconscious and not breathing. A 9-1-1 call is placed on your home VoIP phone. Instead of reaching emergency services, a recording is heard (right).

This message was heard by a teenager in Texas who attempted to call 9-1-1 from every VoIP phone in her home as her parents were shot by intruders.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN VoIP PHONE SERVICE

When considering replacing a traditional landline telephone with VoIP (broadband) phone service, verify with your VoIP service provider the emergency calling features on your VoIP phone and understand the potential limitations of 9-1-1.

Subscribers are drawn to VoIP phone service because:

- **There is one number where they can always be reached.**
- **They save money with free long-distance calls.**

While a VoIP phone may look like a traditional phone, it connects to the Internet, not a telephone line.

"Stop. You must dial 9-1-1 from another telephone. Nine-one-one is not available from this telephone line. No emergency personnel will be dispatched. Please hang-up and dial 9-1-1 from a different phone."



QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD ASK VoIP SERVICE PROVIDERS:

- Will enhanced 9-1-1 work from this phone?
- Will my name, address and callback number be automatically provided to the 9-1-1 center?
- Will my call be sent to the 9-1-1 answering center in my community?
- Will the address provided to emergency responders be my physical rather than the billing address?

If the VoIP phone does not provide enhanced 9-1-1 service (name, address and callback number), tell others who use the VoIP home phone (family members, children, babysitters, neighbors and friends) that 9-1-1 may not work. Emergency 9-1-1 calls must instead be made on a wireless or traditional phone. Your life or a loved one's life could depend on sharing this information.