

In an emergency:

Use your phone to make emergency calls, receive emergency announcements from your city or county, and check on loved ones.

However, remember to keep calls short so others can use the system, too.

This brochure provides some tips to think about.



Telephone Use In Emergencies

CALIFORNIA
PUBLIC
UTILITIES
COMMISSION

If you need help with a dispute about your telecommunications service or bill, first contact your phone company. If your issue is not resolved, you can file a complaint online at: www.calphoneinfo.com or call the **Consumer Affairs Branch and Utility Fraud Hotline: 1(800) 649-7570**



CPUC





911

Your telephone can be a life-saver. You can use it to call for help and to receive calls and messages. But when there is an emergency, everyone in or near the emergency area should avoid using phones for non-emergencies.

By doing so the phone systems may remain open to handle emergency calls, including the calls the fire department and police must make to respond to the emergency.

No phone company's system is able to handle everyone's call if we all try to use our phones at the same time. Also in emergencies cell towers and telephone lines may be disabled. Talk to your loved ones now to create a backup plan.

Telephone Use in Emergencies

Be Prepared for Power Failure

- Purchase a portable radio in case there's a power failure and keep a supply of fresh batteries for it.
- Understand that "cordless" style phones that are plugged into an electrical outlet will not work if there's a power failure. Therefore, you might want to keep a simple "corded" phone that doesn't require electricity to use in emergencies.
- If you have phone service through the Internet or through a cable service, your battery may only work for a few hours. You might want to purchase a backup battery.

Find out if your city or county has an emergency system which will contact residents to alert them about an emergency.

Many of these systems can send text-based messages to communication devices such as TTYs, cell phones and personal digital assistants (PDAs). If these systems have service, find out if you need to register your phone(s). If you have a disability and cannot use the TV or radio, you should continue to use your phone or computer to get more information, but try to limit your calls or keep them short to help keep the phone lines open. We suggest you contact a friend or relative who lives near you who will keep you informed about the emergency and help you, if necessary.



Updates During An Emergency

- Only call **9-1-1** once to state your emergency. Please do not call them for updates. They need to keep their lines open for emergency calls.
- Use your TV, radio, or talk to your neighbors to receive updates on the emergency.

Remember!

When you use your phone to check on loved ones, please keep the call short. If your call won't go through, try text messaging on your cell phone.