**Prepare for Emergencies**

Make copies of important documents and phone numbers. Store in safe place.

Identify an out of state contact person so family members can check-in and receive messages. Out of state calls will reduce the demand on local phone system.

Develop an emergency plan:
- Plan an alternate family meeting place in case you are unable to reach home.
- Discuss what children should do if at school. Identify an alternate person to pick up children on school emergency forms.
- Maintain emergency supplies for 3-7 days (food, water, medications, first aid kit, battery radio, flashlight, etc.)
- Learn how to locate and shut-off (if necessary) electricity, water and gas.

**How to Report Emergencies**

Dial 9-1-1. Speak slowly and clearly. State your name, location and telephone number.

Provide as much detailed information as possible, including:
- Type of event (medical, fire, crime)
- Description of individuals (race, gender, height, weight) and any vehicles involved

Stay on the telephone and follow any instructions the 9-1-1 dispatcher may give.

Never put yourself or anyone else in danger when reporting an emergency.

**During a Disaster or Emergency**

Telephone lines can handle 10% phone use at any given time. If phone use exceeds 10%, the system becomes overloaded and local call service may be interrupted, including 9-1-1 calls.

If you have an emergency and are unable to secure a dial tone, pause and wait, do not click the receiver—that 'restarts' the call request cycle. If there is no dial tone within 60 seconds, the system may be overloaded.

To help reduce phone system overload following a major disaster:
- Only use telephones and cellular phones if you have a life-threatening emergency.
- Try text messaging instead to communicate with others.
- Use a battery powered radio to listen for information bulletins.

**Home & Business Telephone**

Regular telephone lines, referred to as 'land lines', provide 9-1-1 dispatchers with the caller’s location.

Cordless phones also provide the caller’s location but will not work in the event of a power failure. Keep a back-up telephone available to plug directly into the phone jack.

If using a Voice Over Internet Protocol (VoIP) service:
- Always verify your exact location with 9-1-1 dispatcher when reporting any emergency.
- Notify VoIP provider of any changes to physical location of VoIP equipment.
- VoIP service may not function in the event of a broadband or power outage.

**Cell Phones**

When 9-1-1 calls are placed from cell phones, they may be routed to out of area 9-1-1 call centers, known as Public Safety Answering Points or PSAPs, resulting in delays.

Unlike regular telephone lines, cell phones only provide dispatchers the approximate location of the caller (within 325 feet or 100 meters).

If reporting an emergency from a cell phone, provide the 9-1-1 dispatcher with as much location information as possible, including street names, direction you are traveling (i.e., north or south) and nearby landmarks (i.e., a shopping center or restaurant).

**Santa Clara County 211**

2-1-1 is a free, non-emergency phone number and service that provides 24-hour access to health and human services before and after disasters; including food, housing, childcare, senior services, medical care, and much more. Call 2-1-1 or visit www.211scc.org.

**Alert SCC**

AlertSCC is a notification system that is used to send emergency information and instructions to anyone who lives or works in Santa Clara County. AlertSCC will send messages to phone numbers in the 911 and 411 directory listings.

To also receive messages on other devices (cell phones, e-mail) register at www.AlertSCC.com.