

FOR RELEASE
July 28, 2016

Basic 911 service now available across Yukon

WHITEHORSE—The expansion of Basic 911 service to rural communities is now complete with the activation of the 911 system across Yukon.

"I'm pleased to announce this service is now available across the territory, making it easier to call for help in an emergency," Minister of Community Services Currie Dixon said. "911 provides an easy-to-remember emergency number for Yukoners and a familiar number for visitors to the territory. My thanks to our partners in this initiative for their input and hard work in making this happen."

All calls to 911 are routed through the RCMP-managed public safety answering point (PSAP) in Whitehorse. The PSAP opened in February 2016, after the Yukon government invested \$334,000 to relocate the former call centre. The Government of Canada provided an additional \$142,000 through its cost-share commitment under the Territorial Police Services Agreement.

"Providing Basic 911 service across the territory fulfills a commitment we made to rural Yukon residents," Minister of Justice Brad Cathers said. "This is an important step in improving access to emergency services for all Yukoners."

From the 911 call centre, emergency calls are transferred according to the location of the call and nature of the emergency. Emergency response services in rural communities continue to be delivered by municipal and volunteer fire departments, volunteer emergency medical services, community nursing stations and the RCMP.

"The RCMP is pleased to be an integral part of the committed team of first responders in the Yukon," Acting Commanding Officer of the Yukon RCMP Superintendent Brian Jones said. "We are extremely proud of our employees and the work they have done in preparing for the 911 roll-out across the territory."

Northwestel CEO and president Paul Flaherty said: "The safety and well-being of our customers is a top priority for us at Northwestel, and the expansion of 911 is an important step forward. We are committed to building a more connected North, and we're proud to be part of delivering this important public safety tool to all Yukoners."

Association of Yukon Fire Chiefs president Jim Regimbal said: "The Association of Yukon Fire Chiefs advocated for the expansion of 911 service in Yukon to eliminate any doubt or delay about what number to call for help in an emergency. When you need help, all you need to remember now are three digits."

Association of Yukon Communities first vice-president Michael Riseborough said: "A number of communities prepared for 911 service by improving civic addressing. We want to remind everyone to be sure your house number, lot number or property name is clearly visible to first responders from the road."

The 911 service is available via landline and cellular phone wherever a cellular signal can be accessed.

Learn more:
911yukon.ca

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See background.

Contact:

Michael Edwards
Cabinet Communications
867-633-7910
michael.edwards@gov.yk.ca

Amanda Couch
Communications, Community Services
867-332-4188
amanda.couch@gov.yk.ca

Basic 911 Service Background

Public information about using 911 is available online at 911yukon.ca and will be shared through advertising, household mailers and media in the coming days and months.

- 911 is a telecommunications network. It is the means by which a caller can connect to services in an emergency.
- The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission regulates the telecommunications carriers that supply the network needed to direct and connect 911 calls to dispatch facilities.
- Yukon has Basic 911 service. The service does not provide the 911 operator with the phone number or address of the caller.
 - In an emergency, a caller dials 911. The call is answered by an operator in Whitehorse who will ask "What community are

you calling from?” and “Do you require police, fire or ambulance?” The operator transfers the caller to the appropriate local emergency agency.

- The 911 call centre, or Public-Safety Answering Point (PSAP), is operated on behalf of the Yukon government by the RCMP.
 - The PSAP relocated from the Whitehorse RCMP detachment building to larger facilities in the Emergency Response Centre in February 2016.
- Emergency response services in rural communities continue to be delivered by municipal and volunteer fire departments, volunteer emergency medical services, community nursing stations and the RCMP.
- In 1995, Basic 911 service was introduced in Whitehorse and areas within an 80 kilometre radius of the city.
- The local, seven-digit emergency numbers used in communities will remain in service. This provides continuity of service as 911 is adopted.
- Because non-emergency calls may prevent people with real emergencies from reaching 911, Yukoners are reminded to use 911 only if they or someone else are hurt or in danger.

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