

Winona is First In Minnesota to Enhance Public Safety with Smart911

Public Safety Officials Encourage Residents to Sign Up For the Free Service That Provides Emergency Responders With More Information to Save Time and Save Lives

WINONA, MN April 17, 2015 – Public safety officials in Winona County announced today that they are the first location in Minnesota to offer Smart911, the national public safety service, to their community. Smart911 is a free service that allows citizens to create a Safety Profile for their household that can include any information they may want 9-1-1 call takers and first responders to have in the event of an emergency, then if they need to dial 9-1-1 their Safety Profile will immediately display on the call taker's screen saving critical seconds and even minutes in response to the emergency.

“We are extremely proud to be the first community in the state to offer this lifesaving service to our citizens,” said Sheriff Ron Ganrude. “By allowing our citizens to provide vital details to our response teams prior to an emergency, we have the ability to positively enhance our response times and ultimately, the outcome the situation.”

Smart911 allows citizens to [create a Safety Profile](http://www.smart911.com) at www.smart911.com for their household that includes any information they want 9-1-1 and response teams to have in the event of an emergency. When a citizen makes an emergency call, their Safety Profile is automatically displayed to the 9-1-1 call taker, allowing them to send the right response teams to the right location with the right information. Responders can be aware of many details they would not have known previously, and now fire crews can arrive at a house fire knowing how many people live in the home and the location of bedrooms, EMS can be advised of allergies or specific medical conditions and police can have the photo of a missing child in seconds rather than minutes or hours.

“Smart911 is a great step forward in emergency response.” Said Winona Police Chief Paul Bostrack. “When you dial 9-1-1, you are not having your best day, and even the simplest of details can be difficult to communicate in a time of panic. Now we can approach the scene of an emergency more safely, as well as provide faster and more precise response.”

With Smart911, citizens can link both home and work addresses to mobile phones, which can be passed on to responders in the field for a more detailed, rapid response. Additional information including pets in the home, vehicle details in the event of an accident, and even emergency contacts can all be included in a Safety Profile. All information is optional and the citizens have the ability to choose what details they would like to include.

“Having the information that is available through a Safety Profile can greatly affect the way we respond to an emergency,” said Winona Fire Chief Curt Bittle. “If we know exactly where we are going and who we are looking for in a house fire or at the scene of a vehicle accident, those details can help us assess and then respond to those citizens more efficiently.”

Smart911 is currently available in 36 states and more than 1000 municipalities across the country.

Citizens are encouraged to create their Safety Profile with Smart911 today to have their information immediately available to 9-1-1. Smart911 is private and secure, is only used for emergency responses, and only made available to the 9-1-1 system in the event of an emergency call.

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