

Reduce Your Risk Profile

Failure to provide station location on 9-1-1 calls from your PBX phone system poses a major risk to your employees, customers and/or students.

In some instances, a PBX system is located at an administrative location (such as a school district office or company headquarters) with extensions running to many remote locations that are miles away. The emergency 9-1-1 operator must be able to identify the physical location for all phone stations on the PBX system that can be used to dial 9-1-1.

This means that, if you have not taken steps to provide accurate location information for your PBX phone system in California's 9-1-1 database, the 9-1-1 operator may send emergency response personnel to the location where the main PBX system is located rather than to the location from where the 9-1-1 call was placed.

It is your responsibility to input and maintain the 9-1-1 phone station information. Unless you take steps to provide and update accurate number and location data in California's 9-1-1 database, the location information provided to the 9-1-1 operator may not be the location from which the call is actually placed.

Save Lives and Protect Property

Where to get more information on PBX 9-1-1 risks and solutions:

- Contact Your PBX vendor or access PBX user manuals available on-line.
- Contact your telephone service provider about subscribing to PS/ALI service or other options.
- Visit the California Public Utilities Commission website for links to information resources, 9-1-1 solutions and solution providers.
<http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUC/Telco/MLTS+E-911+Workshop.htm>

PBX 9-1-1 Advisory

Will your PBX direct emergency help to the right location?



In an emergency seconds count!



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Where's the 9-1-1 caller?

If you use a Private Branch Exchange (PBX) telephone system, the 9-1-1 dispatcher may see only your corporate or billing address, not the location information of the emergency. If 9-1-1 receives the main address of a multi-story building, but does not receive the floor and room location, precious minutes may be lost in attempting to find the 9-1-1 caller.

Avoid having problems often reported by California's 9-1-1 dispatchers with answering calls from PBX phone systems:

- Avoid the emergency call going to the wrong 9-1-1 agency.
- Avoid police, fire, and paramedics being sent to the wrong location miles from the actual emergency.
- Avoid building security being unaware of the 9-1-1 call and being unable to assist first responders.
- Avoid 9-1-1 dispatchers being unable to call back to the caller when disconnected, instead getting the switchboard at a different location and/or voice mail asking for the extension.
- Avoid untested 9-1-1 call routing following upgrades or conversion to a new VoIP system.

These problems result in delayed emergency response, misallocation of limited public safety resources and considerable disruption of school and business operations — not to mention risks to life and property.

What are my options?

California's 9-1-1 network offers the PBX owner/lessee the option to provide phone station location information such as room number or floor in the 9-1-1 database used by 9-1-1 dispatchers. This feature is invaluable when the caller is excited, confused or unable to give the 9-1-1 operator complete information. Accurate PBX phone station number and location will route the call to the correct 9-1-1 agency and prevent delays in dispatching to the correct address and caller's actual location.

There are a multitude of affordable options available for providing 9-1-1 dispatchers with accurate location information. These include purchasing PBX upgrades, subscribing to services like PS/ALI (Private Switch Automatic Location Identification), upgrading to a hosted VoIP or Centrex system, or working with third party 9-1-1 vendors on a customized solution. Newer PBXs also have built-in options to send a separate notification to building security.



Have A Plan

Understand your phone system's limitations and plan for them. Work with your equipment vendor and local telephone service provider, and educate your staff and students about your phone system's capabilities.

Your plan should be simple yet workable.

1. Identify the location of each phone handset throughout your company's or school district's locations.
2. Document what to do in an emergency. Each emergency may warrant a different response.
3. Develop the emergency plan with the support of your communications administrator and telephone service provider.
4. Include the notification of building security so they can assist first responders.
5. Ensure through testing that 9-1-1 calls are routed to the correct 9-1-1 agency. Your equipment vendor or installer should schedule testing through your local 9-1-1 agency contact in advance using the non-emergency phone number.* Should initial testing fail, additional testing will be scheduled as needed.
6. Update the plan routinely.

*The list of MLTS local 9-1-1 agency contact phone numbers can be found at: <http://www.caloes.ca.gov/PSC/Documents/PDF/MLTSLocal9-1-1AgencyContactList.pdf>