

North Island 9-1-1 Corporation

- serving the Regional Districts of Alberni-Clayoquot, Comox Valley,
Mt. Waddington, Nanaimo (School District #69), Powell River, and Strathcona -

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

March 31, 2010

ENHANCED 9-1-1 IMPROVES INFO FROM CELL PHONE CALLS

North Island 9-1-1, the regional emergency communications service provider on northern Vancouver Island and in Powell River area, has recently completed an update to its technology for the implementation of wireless phase II, which provides dispatchers with general information for 9-1-1 calls placed from cellular phones.

In the past, 9-1-1 dispatchers had only received the address of the cell tower from which the call originated, but with the technology update dispatchers receive latitude and longitude coordinates from GPS-enabled cellular phones and the location information is plotted on a computerized map or determined through triangulation from cellular towers.

“This is a great advance in terms of assisting 9-1-1 dispatchers in responding to emergency calls from cell phones,” said Roy Grant, president of the North Island 9-1-1 corporation. “However, it is important for the public to understand that this technology will not pinpoint a caller’s exact location nor will it provide an exact address in every situation.”

Location information can be affected by cellular signal strength and terrain and should not be solely relied upon. Calls from cellular phones registered or activated on networks outside of Canada will not provide location information. Only cellular phones on the Telus, Bell or Rogers networks are enhanced 9-1-1 capable.

“Callers still remain the best source of location information in the event of an emergency,” said Grant. “When calling 9-1-1, always be prepared to provide your exact location which could be a street address, an apartment number, a highway sign, a cross-street or a trail marker.”

The budget for North Island 9-1-1’s 2010 operations is \$2.125 million. Among other things, the corporation maintains an agreement with the RCMP to provide initial call answering for 9-1-1 calls and operates and maintains a fire dispatch and mapping system used for the dispatch of 49 fire departments covering a geographic area of approximately 40,000 square miles (approximately 60,000 square kilometers).

For information on enhanced 9-1-1, and other important things to remember when calling in an emergency, visit the website at www.nisl911.bc.ca.

-30-

Media contact:

Brian Pearson, senior manager information services & GIS, Comox Valley Regional District/Deputy secretary North Island 9-1-1 Corporation
Tel: 250-334-6020