



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

May 15, 2018

Help reduce accidental 9-1-1 calls

North Island 9-1-1 Corporation in partnership with E-Comm 9-1-1 are launching a public education campaign to help reduce accidental 9-1-1 phone calls within the Comox Valley. North Island 9-1-1 Corporation was established in 1995 to provide and manage emergency 9-1-1 services to the Comox Valley Regional District, the Strathcona Regional District, the Regional Districts of Mount Waddington and Alberni-Clayoquot and a portion (School District No. 69) of the Nanaimo Regional District. In 1999, Powell River Regional District joined the service (excluding Lasqueti Island).

Initial call answering for 9-1-1 calls within North Island region are handled through E-Comm. The emergency communications centre handles thousands of accidental calls to 9-1-1 each year.

“Every year thousands of accidental 9-1-1 calls occur within our communities,” states North Island 9-1-1 President Larry Samson. “What residents might not be aware of is that there are few simple tips to help reduce these calls to ensure time is spent on real emergencies.”

Every time 9-1-1 is accidentally called from a landline, operators are required to call back these dropped calls to determine whether they are real emergencies. If the operator can't contact anyone, a police officer can be dispatched to physically verify. Cellphones and Voice over Internet phones further complicate the process because, unlike with landlines, they provide only general location information to the call-taker so tracking down callers to confirm it was an accidental call is a challenge.

North Island 9-1-1 and E-Comm are asking residents to:

- Protect your cell phone by locking it and storing it carefully.
- Never give phones to children to play with or use as toys.
- Ensure 9-1-1 is not pre-programmed into mobile or landline phones.

Finally if you happen to accidentally call 9-1-1 please stay on the line to ensure the operator is aware there is no emergency.

For more simple tips and learn more about accidental calls please visit www.ni911.ca/education

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