

Emergency Services Recap and Non-Emergency Phone Numbers

Thank you to Bernadette Galvez from the Madison Fire Department and Emily Samson from the Madison Police for taking the time to answer our questions about what happens when we call 911. For those that were unable to attend, here is a recap of what we learned:

What exactly happens after I call 911?

They will dispatch based on what you need. If you're having a serious problem, state your address or location right away.

What is the general response time?

In Madison, police average 3 minutes and firefighters/paramedics average 4-6 minutes.

What if the power is out and I can't call for help?

Charter offers a back-up battery option for your phone should the electricity go out. Life Assist's emergency response button is another great option to get immediate help.

What information should I have and where will they look?

Keep a File of Life updated on your current medications and emergency contacts and hang it in the kitchen, bathroom, or on your nightstand. Otherwise, they will look at what medications are out. If you have a preferred hospital, list that, as well. All traumas will automatically go to UW hospital.

Can they check a phone or computer for information?

Only if they are unlocked and don't have a passcode.

How will they enter a locked home?

If a medical emergency, the fire department will use force to get to you as soon as possible. If police are doing a wellness or house check, they will do a perimeter search to see if there's another access point that's open. They will also go to your neighbors to see if they have a key.

Non-emergency numbers

Madison—255-2345

Middleton—824-7300

Fitchburg—270-4300

Sun Prairie—837-7336

Verona—845-7623

Wausaukee—849-4523

Monona—222-0463

McFarland—838-3151

Cottage Grove—266-4948

Can I leave a key with the police/fire department?

They don't hold extra house keys, but there are a number of other options. You can get a combination lock box that will hold an extra key and attach it to your door or somewhere near your house. You can then call the non-emergency police and have them list the code in their system so they have it if they ever need to get in. For residential homes, you can purchase a Knox Box, about \$200, which is a safe key storage box that attaches to your home. The fire department holds the master key to get into this box if they need to get into your home. This feature is already in most apartment and condo complexes.

What happens if I have pets?

Always get yourself to safety first and let an emergency responder know about your pets, even if you have a sign on your door.