



## **Enhanced 911 Status Report**

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**IOWA HOMELAND SECURITY AND EMERGENCY  
MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**

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## **Introduction**

The Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Department administers the E911 Program per Code of Iowa, Chapter 34A to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the people of Iowa. Iowa has 115 Public Safety Answering Points across 99 counties that handle both landline and wireless 911 calls for the citizens of Iowa.

## **Enhanced 911**

Enhanced 911 (E911) means a service which provides the user of a public telephone system the ability to reach a public safety answering point (PSAP) by dialing the digits 911, and which has the following additional features:

- a. Wireline, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), and Wireless systems route an incoming 911 call to the appropriate public safety answering point selected from the public safety answering points operating in a 911 service area.
- b. Wireline and VoIP systems automatically display the name, address, and telephone number of an incoming 911 call as well as the public safety agency servicing the address at the appropriate public safety answering point.
- c. Wireless systems automatically display location of the tower that received the call and the call back number of the phone used to make the 911 call. This is referred to as a Phase 1 call. A Phase 2 call includes latitude and longitude location information of the phone making the 911 call. A Phase 2 call allows the PSAP to map the location of the caller within 300 feet.

## **Wireline E911**

### **History.**

In 1986, the General Assembly passed a law that created a 29 member State Emergency Telephone Number Commission. This commission was directed to study the issue of statewide implementation of 911 services and submit a written report with its recommendations. The Commission issued their report in January 1987 and the legislative language contained in the report was introduced as House File 2400. House File 2400 was passed by the General Assembly and was signed into law by Governor Branstad on May 6, 1988. This law has been amended several times, most recently during the 2013 session and is codified as Code of Iowa, Chapter 34A.

Under the provisions of Chapter 34A (Iowa Administrative Code Section 605-Chapter 10), the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management has responsibility for the administration of the Iowa Enhanced 911 (E911) Program. The law also requires that each county in the state establish a joint 911 service board. Each board has the responsibility to develop a countywide E911 plan, detailing the manner and cost for the implementation of an E911 system. However, joint 911 service boards are not required to implement service. The Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management has the responsibility to review and approve these plans. All 99 counties have approved E911 service plans.

The 2012 General Assembly amended Code of Iowa Chapter 34A under Senate File 2332, which was signed into law by Governor Branstad on May 2, 2012. Senate File 2332 required the Homeland Security and Emergency Management Division of the Department of Public Defense convene a task force of stakeholders to consider and offer recommendations regarding needed upgrades and enhancements to the state's E911 Program. The final report was submitted to the Legislature on December 1, 2012 detailing the recommendations from the Task Force. The final report may also be found on our website at <http://iowahomelandsecurity.gov> under the Programs section for E911.

### **Surcharge.**

Should a joint E911 service board decide to implement service, they may elect to fund the recurring and non-recurring cost of the system with an E911 surcharge on each telephone access line within the E911 service area. In order to impose the surcharge in the past, a referendum must have been passed by a simple majority of the voters within the service area. The amount of surcharge to be placed on the referendum was determined by a formula, established in law, and could vary from \$.25 to \$2.50 per month, per telephone access line. The \$2.50 surcharge could only be in place for 24 months, after which time the surcharge would revert to the original surcharge being collected. All increases beyond \$1.00 require a voter referendum for each 24 month period.

Senate File 2332 imposed a temporary moratorium on the alternative surcharge (up to \$2.50 for 24 months) until 150 days after submission or recommendations by the E911 Task Force.

House File 644 eliminated the requirement of a local referendum to impose the surcharge and the alternative surcharge. Surcharge for wire line 911 services was set at \$1.00 per month, per access line across the entire state.

The Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management has the responsibility to order the implementation of the surcharge with each telephone service provider, providing service within the E911 service area. Within the state, there are 295 incumbent and competitive local exchange service providers. Each telephone service provider remits collected surcharge funds directly to the respective joint E911 service board on a calendar quarterly basis.

*As of December 31, 2013, surcharge was being collected by the service boards at the following rates:*

*Surcharge*  
*Surcharge = \$1.00*                      *99 counties*  
*(See Attachment #1)*

### **Coverage.**

The entire State of Iowa provides Enhanced 911 Wireline Service to all its citizens.

## **Wireless E911**

### **History.**

In 1996, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) put forth a mandate that requires wireless E911 service to be put in place and function similarly to wireline E911. The 1998 General Assembly amended Code of Iowa Chapter 34A in response to the FCC action.

Under this law, the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is given the responsibility for the “wireless” E911 program. The 911 Program within the Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management is funded by an annual appropriation of wireless surcharge funds made by the Iowa Legislature.

### **Surcharge.**

In accordance with 34A (Iowa Administrative Code Section 605-Chapter 10), the State E911 program manager ordered the collection of a statewide wireless E911 \$0.50 surcharge to begin on January 1, 1999. The amended surcharge rate of \$0.65 went into effect on July 1, 2004. This surcharge is collected by the wireless service providers and

remitted to the State E911 program on a quarterly basis. These funds are to be used for the development and on-going operation of a wireless Next Generation-IP enabled E911 network.

Senate File 2332, added a new section for prepaid wireless surcharge. The prepaid wireless surcharge shall be collected by the seller from the consumer with respect to each retail transaction occurring in this state. The prepaid wireless surcharge fee will be \$0.33 on each retail transaction. The prepaid surcharge will be remitted to the Department of Revenue who shall transfer all remitted prepaid wireless E911 surcharge to the Treasurer of the State for deposit in the E911 Emergency Communications Surcharge fund. A seller may deduct and retain three percent of prepaid wireless surcharges that are collected by the seller from the consumers. The Department of Revenue may retain two percent of collected surcharges to reimbursement its direct costs of administering the collection and remittance of prepaid wireless surcharges.

House File 644 increased the monthly surcharge to \$1.00 to be imposed on each communications service number provided in this state. This also caused the pre-paid surcharge rate to increase to \$0.51 on each retail transaction. This surcharge shall not be imposed on wire-line based communications or prepaid wireless telecommunications service.

By law, the surcharge was expended in the following order: Homeland Security and Emergency Management for program administration, 21% of the collected funds to fund wireless service providers Phase 1 costs, wireline carrier's transport costs, 911 database and routing charges, and PSAP funding of 25% of the collected funds.

It should be noted that wireless carriers were only allowed to recover costs that were related to Phase 1 service. Any additional costs that they incurred to provide Phase 2 service was their responsibility. The wireless carriers agreed to this payment methodology during the 2004 legislative session.

Senate File 2332 amended Code of Iowa Chapter 34A by removing the 21% of the collected surcharge funds that funded the wireless service providers Phase 1 costs. Beginning July 1, 2012, the funds were now expended in the following order: Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management for program administration, wire line carrier's transport costs, 911 database and routing charges, and PSAP funding of 46% of the collected funds. This increased the PSAP funding by 21%.

House File 644 reinstated the cost recovery for the wireless service providers Phase 1 costs for a three year period, beginning July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2016. 13% of the

collected surcharge funds are now allocated to be used to recover costs associated to Phase 1 services. Any additional costs that they incur to provide Phase 2 services are their responsibility.

### **Wireless E911 Implementation.**

Since December 31, 2007, all 115 PSAPs in our 99 counties accept Phase 2 calls from the wireless service providers. Each PSAP is able to accept the latitude/longitude information that accompanies a Phase 2 Wireless E911 call.

The Department of Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management has upgraded the wireless E911 system to support the use of the Next Generation 911 (NG911) emergency services IP-based system. The upgrade will allow texting, video, and picture messaging to access emergency care via 911 once it becomes available from the wireless carriers. As of November 2, 2012, all 115 PSAPs have been migrated to the new Next Generation 911 network. Wireless service providers completed their work by the end of December 2012, and the legacy network has been disconnected.

### **Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) E911.**

In June of 2005 the Federal Communications Commission issued guidance that required VoIP phone service providers to deliver E911 calls through the native 911 network. In response to this guidance the State E911 Program began discussions with both local and industry representatives on the best method to deliver the VoIP E911 call to the PSAP. By mutual agreement it was determined that the most efficient way to deliver the call is via the wireless E911 network. Presently, VoIP service providers are connecting to the wireless E911 network to deliver their customers 911 calls to the appropriate PSAP.

While the wireless E911 network provides the most technologically efficient platform to deliver the call, there are underlying issues that will require further consideration. Based on an FCC ruling declaring VoIP companies data service providers, these companies are not required to collect an E911 surcharge by Iowa law.

Senate File 2332 updated its definitions to now include VoIP companies. VoIP companies are now required to collect and remit surcharge as a Communications Service Provider.



## **US Department of Transportation and US Department of Commerce Grant.**

On September 30, 2009, under the ENHANCE 911 (Ensuring Needed Help Arrives Near Callers Employing 911) Act of 2004, the state received a grant in the amount of \$1,333,456.30 for migration to an IP-Enabled emergency network. The grant required a non-federal dollar match for every federal dollar received. The matching funds came from the wireless carryover fund per Code of Iowa, Chapter 34A.7a(2g). The project was completed by September 30, 2012. The plan called for using the grant funds to begin the process of developing and implementing a Next Generation IP-Enabled E911 network and to migrate our current Wireless E911 network to an NG 911 network. An RFP was issued and bids accepted for the upgrade to the current network, the bid was awarded to Telecommunications Systems, Inc (TCS).

The grant funds were expended within the timeframe established. The funds were used to purchase the equipment for the two data centers, along with the equipment and training needed at each PSAP to interface with their equipment to implement the Next Generation 911 network.

## **TeleCommunication Systems, Inc (TCS) Contract.**

A contract was signed on July 8, 2011 with TCS for the development and implementation of a Statewide IP Enabled Next Generation 911 Systems. The initial contract is for five years, with the option for five additional one-year renewal terms.

## **2014 Goals and Initiatives.**

In 2014, there are several goals to be achieved and initiatives that will need to be addressed.

The next phase of the Next Generation 911 project will be to work with the local 911 Service Boards on upgrading their call taking equipment to IP enabled. This will allow the PSAPs to be able to accept text messaging, videos, and picturing messaging when it is available from the wireless carriers. The local 911 service boards may utilize the 911 carryover funds along with local funding to purchase the equipment. Our goal is to have all equipment upgraded at the local level by December 31, 2015.

House File 644 has charged the HSEMD 911 program manager, in consultation with the E911 Communications Council, to establish a methodology for determining and collecting PSAP cost and expenses data through the local E911 Service Boards. A committee will be developed to establish this methodology and data collection is to begin January 1, 2014 for a two year period. First report is due to the general assembly by March 1, 2016.

Under HF 644, we have also been charged with conducting a study to identify areas in which efficiencies of operations and expenses could be achieved in regard to E911 emergency communication systems at both the state and local level. A task force will be established to begin exploring options to be provided in this report. Report is due to the general assembly on July 1, 2014.

The final item from HF 644 is to conduct a study to review the administration of the E911 emergency telephone communication system and expenditures associated with maintaining and operating the system commencing July 1, 2013. The report containing the results of the study will be completed and submitted to the general assembly by January 1, 2016.

The Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management will continue to work hand in hand with the Statewide E911 Communications Council, the Iowa Utilities Board, the Iowa Telecommunication Association, the Iowa Statewide Interoperable Communications Board, and Local E911 Service Boards to maintain and improve the level of 911 services within the state.

# Attachment #1

