

# Texting could become a lifesaver

Wireless customers in Cobb County can now send a text message to 911 operators for emergency help when unable to make a voice call. This service will be available to the majority of wireless customers.

All major carriers have completed integration with the Cobb County 911 system. This program was not developed as a replacement or option to calling 911 in an emergency situation, but rather as an enhancement to reaching 911 services in three specific situations:

- The caller is hearing/voice impaired.
- A medical emergency renders the person incapable of speech.
- When speaking out loud would put the caller in danger, such as a home invasion, an abduction, a domestic violence incident or an active shooter scenario.

"The safety of residents and visitors in Cobb County is our number-one concern," Ann Flynn, Cobb County 911 director, said. "Text to 911 could be a lifesaver, especially for people who might otherwise not be able to make a voice call."

Cobb County will receive text to 911 calls from both unincorporated Cobb County and from the cities within Cobb. Information will be relayed to the appropriate city if necessary. Smyrna 911 has deployed its own text to 911. The county will work with Smyrna to provide seamless police, fire and medical services.

Important information for wireless customers in Cobb County:

- Customers should use the texting option only when calling 911 is not an option.
- Using a phone to call 911 is still the most efficient way to reach emergency help. Texting is not always instantaneous, which is critical during a life-threatening emergency. It may take slightly

longer to dispatch emergency services in text to 911 situations because of the time involved.

- Providing location information and nature of the emergency in the first text message is imperative.

- Cobb public safety agencies will receive only the location of the cell phone tower closest to the call's origin, not the caller's actual location.

- Text abbreviations or slang should never be used so that the intent of the dialogue can be as clear as possible.

- Customers must be in range of cell towers in Cobb County. If customers are outside or near the edge of the county, the message may not reach a Cobb County public safety agency.

- Texts to 911 from areas where the service is not available will receive a "bounce back" message telling them to make a voice call.

- Texts sent to 911 have the same 160-character limit as other text messages.

- When texting 911 do not include others in the text.

- Wireless customers must have mobile phones that are capable of sending text

messages. Customers should consult their OTT (over the top) messaging providers to determine if and how text to 911 is provided by the OTT application.

- The texting function should only be used for emergency situations that require an immediate response from police, fire or emergency medical services. For non-emergency situations, customers should contact their local public safety agency via a 10 digit non-emergency number.

- SMS 911 should only be used to communicate between emergency help and the texter with no pictures, video, other attachments or other recipients appended to the message.



## Week dedicated to thanking Public Safety personnel

The Cobb Chamber is hosting the 16th annual Public Safety Appreciation Week Oct. 5-11. This countywide effort will give the community an opportunity to say "thank you" to public safety personnel who protect the residents of our municipalities and our county each day.

Take pictures of appreciation gifts, ceremonies and participants thanking personnel and post on the Cobb Chamber's Public Safety Appreciation Week Facebook page using #CobbAppreciates. Submit pictures to Anna Goolsby at agooolsby@cobbchamber.org.

If you see Public Safety personnel out and about in the community, take a moment to say hello and thank them for their service. Take lunch or drop off baked goods at your local precincts, fire stations.

Post a message of thanks to our county's public safety personnel on message boards, social media, in newsletters and on marquees during the week

Write letters to show your appreciation and drop them off at local precincts and fire stations.

Recognize public safety personnel at your school or company.

Partner with your local public safety agency for the week and plan safety education classes that focus on employee and company safety or education activities.

Express appreciation in your own creative way. You can create public safety appreciation banners, posters, collages or cards and have them delivered to a public safety facility, host a cookout at your place of worship or organization and invite police officers, firefighters or EMTs in your area.

## Seminar to help local businesses

Do you feel that you can't balance family, work and caregiving? Are family members not helping? Do you feel your adult child will never be independent? Bring your questions to the experts at the Atlanta Fearless Caregiver Conference 9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Wednesday, **Oct. 21** (lunch included) at the Cobb County Senior Wellness Center, 1150 Powder Springs St., Suite 100, Marietta. Learn tried and true "time-off techniques" for all caregivers and expert advice for beating stress and depression. There are limited free tickets. For questions call 877-829-2734 and to attend, register at [www.caregiver.com](http://www.caregiver.com).

## Cobb County work up for grabs

The final How to do Business with Cobb seminar for 2015 will be held on 5:30 p.m. Thursday, **Oct. 22** at the Senior Wellness Center, 1150 Powder Springs Street, Suite 100, Marietta. It is free to attend, space is limited and registration is required. To RSVP send an email to [Inger.Eberhart@cobbcounty.org](mailto:Inger.Eberhart@cobbcounty.org) or call 770-528-3317.

## Donations sought for families

Low-income families often have the daily stress of choosing between food and diapers. Prolonged wearing of a wet diaper causes diaper rash and a crying baby leads to more stress in the home. Throughout October, you can help reach the goal of collecting more than 100,000 diapers for low-income families with infants and young children. The event is collecting all sizes of diapers. Join us for the Seventh Annual Cobb Diaper Day 5 p.m. **Oct. 26** at Glover Park on the Marietta Square.



## New public hours for tag office

Effective **Oct. 1**, The Cobb County Tax Commissioner's Motor Vehicle Division will have new business hours. The hours are 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday thru Friday. For more information and forms, visit us at [www.cobbtax.org](http://www.cobbtax.org).



## Advance voting for cities

Elections are being held on **Nov. 3** in the cities of Austell, Kennesaw, Powder Springs and Smyrna. To be eligible to vote, you must live inside these city limits.

You can check your Voter Precinct Card or go online to [www.mvp.sos.ga.gov](http://www.mvp.sos.ga.gov) to look up your voter registration and your election day polling location.

Advance voting begins **Oct. 12** at the Elections Office in the West Park Government Center, 736 Whitlock Ave., Marietta. No reason is required and registered voters of these cities may vote at this location in person 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday through Friday until **Oct. 30**. Additional advance voting locations in each of the cities will be open 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Oct. 26-30:

**Austell: Austell City Hall**

2716 Broad St. SW, Austell

**Kennesaw: Ben Robertson Community Center**

2753 Watts Dr., Kennesaw

**Powder Springs: Community Development Building**

4488 Pineview Dr., Powder Springs

**Smyrna: Smyrna Community Center**

200 Village Green Circle, Smyrna

Any voter may also apply for a vote-by-mail ballot and no reason is required. Ballots will be mailed out beginning Oct. 12. Applications are available at [cobbelections.org](http://cobbelections.org). For More Information, Call 770-528-2581.

## Grant workshops to help local groups

Cobb Community Development Block Grant Program staff will host informational workshops for organizations in the county seeking grant funding through federal and state grant programs. These workshops are intended for organizations not currently funded through the CDBG Program Office. Learn the basics about CDBG, HOME Investment Partnership, Emergency Solutions Grant, Community Services Block Grant, Justice Assistance Grant and Emergency Food and Shelter Program. The workshops will be held:

- 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, **Oct. 13**, West Cobb Regional Library, 1750 Dennis Kemp Lane, Kennesaw
- 1:30 p.m., Thursday, **Nov. 5**, Mountain View Regional Library, 3320 Sandy Plains Road, Marietta

For more information, contact Priscilla Parton at 770-528-1455.



**Cobb County...Expect the Best!**

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