



## ROCKWALL COUNTY

# COMMAND POST



Rockwall County Office of Emergency Management

Situational Report : April - June 2011

Volume 2, Issue II

- Visit [www.knowwhat2do.com](http://www.knowwhat2do.com) for information on personal disaster preparedness.
- Register for [Nixle](#) to receive urgent alerts from Rockwall County Emergency Management.
- Save lives! Apply to volunteer today!
- Become a fan on Facebook! [www.facebook.com/rcemo](http://www.facebook.com/rcemo)
- Follow us on Twitter! [www.twitter.com/rcemo](http://www.twitter.com/rcemo)

If you received a paper copy of the “Command Post” and would like to subscribe to the newsletter via email, please let us know at

[emergencymanagement@rockwallcountytexas.com](mailto:emergencymanagement@rockwallcountytexas.com)

### Inside this issue:

9-1-1 Tips & Guidelines	1
Emergency Notification	1
Coordinator’s Corner	2
Upcoming Events	2
Disaster Spotlight - Mass Violence	2

## 9-1-1: Tips & Guidelines

- When Should I Use 9-1-1? 9-1-1 is for emergencies ONLY. An emergency is any serious situation where a law enforcement officer, fire fighter or emergency medical help is needed right away. You are encouraged to call 9-1-1 even if you are unsure whether your situation is an emergency.
- 9-1-1 should NOT be used for: information such as road closures or traffic updates, directory assistance, if you are bored and just want to talk, to pay traffic tickets, for your pet or as a prank. If you dial 9-1-1 by mistake, do not hang up. Make sure to explain to the call taker what happened and that there is no emergency.
- It’s a prank call when someone calls 9-1-1 as a joke or calls 9-1-1 and hangs up. If 9-1-1 call takers are busy with prank or non-emergency calls, someone with a real emergency may not be able to get the help they need. In most places, prank calls are illegal.
- If you have an emergency and dial 9-1-1 do your best to stay calm and answer all questions. This will help the call taker understand the situation and assist with your emergency until first responders arrive.
- Know your location. If you dial 9-1-1 from a cell phone, your call may not be routed to the 9-1-1 center that services the area you are in. Look for landmarks and cross streets and make sure you are aware of what city and county you are in. Providing an accurate address is critically important when making a wireless 9-1-1 call.
- Teach your children how to call 9-1-1. Be sure they know what 9-1-1 is, how to dial from your home and cell phone, and to trust the 9-1-1 call taker. Make sure your child is physically able to reach at least one phone in your home. When calling 9-1-1 your child needs to know their name, parent’s name, telephone number, and most importantly their address. Tell them to answer all the call takers questions and to stay on the phone until instructed to hang up.
- Helpful 9-1-1 websites for more information:

[www.nena.org](http://www.nena.org)

[www.apco911.org](http://www.apco911.org)

[www.911.org](http://www.911.org)

[www.911.state.tx.us/kidshome.html](http://www.911.state.tx.us/kidshome.html)

If you have any questions about 9-1-1 usage or would like more information, please visit one of the websites listed above or call Rockwall County Emergency Management at 972-204-7080.

SOURCE: [nena.org](http://nena.org)

## Emergency Notification

Severe weather season is quickly approaching. To be ready in the event of severe weather, it is important to have multiple forms of communication. There is always a chance your home could lose power or telephone service and backup communication may be necessary. Below are some suggestions to make sure your family is storm ready.

**NOAA All Hazards Weather Radio:** The NOAA weather radio can be programmed to receive severe weather alerts for Rockwall County. Listen for emergency information and alerts such as severe thunderstorm or tornado watches and warnings.

**Emergency Alert System (EAS):** The EAS is the system used by television and radio broadcasters to disseminate important emergency information such as severe weather or AMBER alerts that have been issued by national, state or local authorities.

**Outdoor Warning Sirens:** Outdoor warning sirens are used to notify people that are outdoors that they need to move indoors to a safe location. If sirens are activated, move indoors and tune to a local broadcast to find the nature of the emergency and what actions need to be taken.

**The Internet:** The internet can be used to view websites such as the National Weather Service at [weather.gov/fortworth](http://weather.gov/fortworth). The National Weather Service provides up-to-date information on local weather watches and warnings.

**Nixle:** Nixle is an emergency notification system used by Rockwall County Emergency Management to notify residents in the event of a severe weather warning or other emergency. If a severe weather warning is issued, Nixle will alert the registered user via email and text message. To register for this free service, visit [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com) or text your zip code to 888777.\*

\*Text and data rates may apply.



## Rockwall County Office of Emergency Management

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**STAY INFORMED.**  
**GET INVOLVED.**  
**BE READY.**

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- Over 240 million calls are made to 9-1-1 each year in the United States.
- Create an evacuation plan with places to meet inside and outside of your immediate neighborhood.

## COORDINATOR'S CORNER

The first couple of weeks of February were pretty hectic with two consecutive weeks of winter weather storms. I was able to spend some time in the Rockwall County Dispatch Office monitoring the conditions of these storms. I found out that the two dispatchers were extremely busy answering calls and dispatching calls for emergencies.

While in there, I also noticed that the "911" line was almost constantly ringing. In talking with the dispatchers, I learned that several of these calls were not true emergencies. Many residents wanted to report power outages and check the conditions of the icy roadways. Please take a few minutes to review the "911 tips and guidelines" on page one from the National Emergency Number Association. If you think that you have a "life threatening" situation, do not hesitate to call "911" immediately!

As we move into spring, please remember to be on the watch for severe thunderstorms. Make sure you have signed up for **Nixle** and have a weather radio as a backup.

If you have any questions or concerns related to personal preparedness or emergency management, please contact our office at 972-204-7080. As always, **Stay Informed, Get Involved and Be Ready!**

### Upcoming Events for Rockwall County OEM:

- April 22* - Good Friday Holiday - County Offices Closed
- April 28* - 7:00 pm - Town Hall Meeting: Rowlett Community Center
- May 14* - 10:00am - 2:00pm - Sheriff's Office Open House
- May 30* - Memorial Day Holiday - County Offices Closed



**Rockwall County CRI Still Needs Volunteers! If you or someone you know would like to serve the citizens of Rockwall County, please apply today! Visit [www.rockwallcountytexas.com](http://www.rockwallcountytexas.com) for details and more information.**



## Disaster Spotlight - Mass Violence

**Due to recent events in the news, our office feels it is important to inform the residents of Rockwall County how to be prepared in the event there is a public act of mass violence or an "active shooter" situation.**

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security recommends all individuals take the time to learn more about what is often termed as an "active shooter."

An Active Shooter is an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined and populated area; in most cases, active shooters use firearms and there is no pattern or method to their selection of victims.

Active shooter situations are unpredictable and evolve quickly. Typically, the immediate deployment of law enforcement is required to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to victims.

Because active shooter situations are often over within 10 to 15 minutes, before law enforcement arrives on the scene, individuals must be prepared both mentally and physically to deal with an active shooter situation.

### Good Practices for Coping with an Active Shooter Situation

- Be aware of your environment and any possible dangers.
- Take note of the two nearest exits in any facility you visit.
- If you are in an office, stay there and secure the doors.
- If you are in a hallway, get into a room and secure the door.
- Call 911 when it is safe to do so.

### Tips for Evacuating or Hiding Out

**Evacuate:** If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the premises.

**Be sure to:**

- Have an escape route and plan in mind.
- Evacuate regardless of whether others agree to follow.
- Leave your belongings behind.
- Help others escape, if possible.
- Prevent individuals from entering an area where the active shooter may be.
- Keep your hands visible.
- Follow the instructions of any police officers.
- Do not attempt to move wounded people.
- Call 911 when you are safe.

**Hide Out:** If evacuation is not possible, find a place to hide where the active shooter is less likely to find you. Your hiding place should:

- Be out of the active shooter's view.
- Provide protection if shots are fired in your direction (i.e. an office with a closed and locked door.)
- Not trap you or restrict your options for movement.

To prevent an active shooter from entering your hiding place:

- Lock the door.
- Blockade the door with heavy furniture.
- If the active shooter is nearby:
  - Lock the door.
  - Silence your cell phone and/or pager.
  - Turn off any source of noise (TV's, radio, etc.)
  - Hide behind large items (cabinets, desk, etc.)
  - Remain quiet.

If evacuation and hiding out are not possible:

- Remain calm.
- Dial 911, if possible, to alert police to the active shooter's location.
- If you cannot speak, leave the line open and allow the dispatcher to listen.

SOURCE: [knowwhat2do.com](http://knowwhat2do.com);  
DHS.gov