



MARYLAND
Association of
COUNTIES

PRESS RELEASE

Maryland Association of County Emergency Managers
Emergency Communications Committee

Update on TEXT to 9-1-1

Annapolis, MARYLAND - On Wednesday February 21, 2018, the Board of Public Works approved a contract with COMTECH/TCS Telecommunications Corporation, a TEXT to 9-1-1 service provider.

The Maryland Association of County Emergency Managers and its Emergency Communications Committee commend the Board of Public Works for this advancement on TEXT to 9-1-1 and provide the following information on TEXT to 9-1-1:

- *TEXT to 9-1-1 capabilities currently exist only in Frederick County, which has served as a pilot for this technology since 2013. At this time, TEXT to 9-1-1 will not function in any other location in Maryland except Frederick County.*
- Maryland counties and Baltimore City operate the State's 24 primary 9-1-1 Call Centers.
- As a result of the Board of Public Works' action last week, county governments may begin a process of acquiring and implementing TEXT to 9-1-1 by joining the State's contract with COMTECH/TCS. Counties and Baltimore City may also pursue contracts with other TEXT to 9-1-1 providers independent of the State contract.
- TEXT to 9-1-1, like any new service, will take time to implement fully. There are several issues that must be addressed before all of Maryland's 9-1-1 Centers in Maryland will be able to receive and process their first 9-1-1 text message. These include call-taker training, equipment installation, and cell carrier coordination.
- TEXT to 9-1-1 availability in your county will depend on your county's individual timeline. Even once available, 9-1-1 professionals recommend you only use TEXT to 9-1-1, if you can't call.
- **Again: currently, only Frederick County has TEXT to 9-1-1 capability.**

Maryland's county governments advocate for TEXT to 9-1-1 and other upgraded 9-1-1 services. A State-level Commission to address Next Generation 9-1-1 is a 2018 MACo Legislative Initiative. This important advancement was chosen by Maryland's 23 counties and Baltimore City as one of the Association's top 4 priorities.

For more information regarding TEXT to 9-1-1, please contact Ross Coates, Facilitator, Maryland Association of County Emergency Managers, Emergency Communications Committee, 410-638-3409, rrcoates@harfordpublicsafety.org.

For more information regarding MACo's 2018 Next Generation 9-1-1 Legislative Initiative, contact Kevin Kinnally, 410-269-0043, kkinnally@mdcounties.org

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