

**For Information**

---

**REPORT TITLE: 9-1-1 Annual Update - 2020**

**FROM: Sean Baird, Commissioner of Digital and Information Services**

---

## **OBJECTIVE**

The 9-1-1 Advisory Committee is accountable to provide annual updates on 9-1-1 activity in the Region of Peel.

### **REPORT HIGHLIGHTS**

- The Regional 9-1-1 emergency number service represents a partnership among the Peel Regional Police, the City of Mississauga, the City of Brampton, the Town of Caledon, the Region of Peel and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in providing emergency communications service to Peel residents.
  - In 2020, 9-1-1 Communicators received 555,853 calls for emergency services with 327,136 or 59 per cent being valid emergency calls.
  - Call volumes in 2020 were lower due to the pandemic
  - 228,717 calls to 9-1-1 or 41 per cent were misuse of the services such as misdials, pocket calls, test calls, and hang ups.
  - Efforts continue to build awareness about the proper use of 9-1-1 to reduce unnecessary demand on the system
  - A working group led by the Commissioner of Health has been established to address 9-1-1 misuse through evidence informed and targeted interventions.
- 

## **DISCUSSION**

### **1. Background**

Peel Regional 9-1-1 service was implemented in 1988 and a 9-1-1 Advisory Group was established to ensure collaboration and coordination of the 9-1-1 system which is a partnership between Peel Regional Police, the City of Mississauga, the City of Brampton, the Town of Caledon, the Region of Peel and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. It provides emergency communications to Peel residents through a dedicated telephone network.

### **2. 9-1-1 Performance**

In 2020, 555,853 calls were received for 9-1-1 in Peel. Of those, 327,136 calls or 59 per cent were valid requests for emergency assistance, and 228,717 calls or 41 per cent were classified as misdials, pocket calls, test calls, and hang ups.

## **9-1-1 Annual Update - 2020**

Calls to 9-1-1 decreased by 2 per cent in 2020, which is an exception to historic upward trends. The reduction in overall call volume due to the pandemic, which resulted in fewer residents out in the community. Short duration calls were up by 4 per cent and misuse calls increased by 1 per cent. Mobile technology is a contributing factor, with increased opportunity for inappropriate use of 9-1-1 including pocket dials and short duration calls.

9-1-1 Communicators answered 63 per cent of all calls in 10 seconds and 70 per cent in 20 seconds. This is below the National Emergency Number Association standard target of 90 per cent in 10 seconds, or 95 per cent in 20 seconds. Appendix I provides a 5-year comparison of call volumes and service levels.

Twenty-four new 9-1-1 call takers were hired over the course of 2020 to address service levels to residents.

### **3. Raising Public Awareness and Community Engagement**

It is not easy to know what to do when in a state of stress or in a panic situation. Throughout 2021, there has been continued efforts made and attention provided to increasing awareness' about the proper use of calling 9-1-1 and attention made to building awareness to reducing inappropriate calls to 9-1-1.

To assist in educating Peel residents about the proper use of 9-1-1, the Region has developed online resources such as the 9-1-1 Emergency Service informational web page <http://www.peelregion.ca/emergency/emerg.htm>. Municipal partners, including the City of Brampton, City of Mississauga, and Town of Caledon all feature 9-1-1 informational webpages, dedicated to providing residents with information about the proper use of the 9-1-1 service. Educational packages with digital links have been shared with local hospitals, schools, libraries, and community centres.

We continued to highlight the appropriate use of 9-1-1 during 9-1-1 Awareness Week, April 11 to April 17, 2021. Emergency Preparedness Week was suspended in 2020 and 2021 due to the pandemic and the Mass Vaccination efforts.

In addition, the Emergency Services Steering Committee, of Ontario (ESSC) has formed a 9-1-1 Call Volume Reduction Workgroup. With a three-year mandate, the goal of the workgroup is to address 9-1-1 misuse through evidence informed and targeted interventions with particular attention to address the volume of non-emergency calls and related costs impacting emergency services across Ontario. This working group is being led by the Commissioner of Health.

In 2021, this working group has been summarizing evidence and understanding of 9-1-1 misuse across municipalities represented by ESSC membership, through survey and key informant interviews of various stakeholder, to inform potential interventions and approaches to reduce misuse of 9-1-1 services.

## **CONCLUSION**

The 9-1-1 emergency number service is an essential component of the emergency communication network in the Region of Peel. The continued success of the 9-1-1 service reflects the combined dedicated efforts of all the public safety communication professionals within the Region

**APPENDICES**

Appendix I - 5-year Comparison of Call Volumes and Service Levels

---

*Authored By: Michelle Orth, Acting Director Community Connections*