



MEDIA RELEASE

Contact: Tim Watkins, SBCTA (SBCOG)
Chief, Legislative & Public Affairs
909.884.8276 | Office
twatkins@gosbcta.com

Art Andres, CONFIRE JPA
Director
909.356.2377 | Office
aandres@confire.org

Updated 9-1-1 service improves response times, frees up emergency crews

9-1-1 service throughout San Bernardino County has been significantly enhanced with a new, more efficient process for handling incoming calls to determine the appropriate level of service.

CONFIRE is partnering with the San Bernardino County Council of Governments (SBCOG) and emergency agencies across the county to implement an Emergency Communication Nurse System™ (ECNS) Plan called *Right Care, Right Time*, helping to ensure that residents receive the right care at the right time in the right place.

Right Care, Right Time addresses overuse of the 9-1-1 System which creates the domino effect of impacting Emergency Room overcrowding and the domino effect of having ambulances waiting to transfer patient care to Emergency Room staff. The service also frees up ambulances and fire crews for situations that require their urgent attention.

“Public safety agencies have done a fantastic job teaching the public to call 9-1-1 when there is an emergency. What we have not done a very good job of is teaching everyone what is a true emergency. We are now able to use evidence-based protocols to safely determine the appropriate level of care,” said Art Andres, CONFIRE Director. “Not every 9-1-1 call should have fire department paramedics on a fire engine and an ambulance going with lights/sirens. ECNS allows trained nurses to recommend the *Right Care, Right Now*. Once a 9-1-1 call is determined to be lower acuity, nurses spend time with the caller to determine the appropriate level of care and facilitate the location to receive care based on a directory of resources.”

Right Care Right Time was launched in December 2020 and is currently provided to those who call for an ambulance within the CONFIRE service area, including Colton, Loma Linda, Apple Valley, Rancho Cucamonga, Redlands, Chino Valley, Rialto, San Bernardino County, Big Bear, Montclair, San Manuel, Running Springs and Victorville.

Once a 9-1-1 call comes into the dispatch center, it is given a code. Any call requiring an emergency response will be processed as such. Non-Emergency calls routed to the system will go through a series of questions, and will be given a recommended level of care. If transportation is necessary, ambulance alternatives are then determined.

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“ECNS is a bold step forward in improving 9-1-1 service and response times in the nation’s largest geographic county and one of California’s fastest-growing population centers. This builds on the tremendous work our emergency personnel are already known for, and is one more example of why our County has become such a desirable destination for residents and businesses,” said Curt Hagman, Chairman of the County Board of Supervisors and President of the SBCOG Board.

CONFIRE gets about 19,000 9-1-1 calls a month. Of those, 18-20% are low acuity and can be diverted to the ECNS nurses. Currently, *Right Care, Right Time* being in its infancy, has limited capacity to divert as many calls as could be. Currently about 45 calls per day are eligible to be diverted to a Registered Nurse in the CONFIRE dispatch system, but due to staffing and fund availability, *Right Care, Right Time* is unable to capture all the calls. However, as the program grows and ultimately finds a dedicated funding source, the goal is to address all eligible calls.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.gosbcta.com/ecns>

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Local agency partners are available for direct contact.

Tracey Martinez	San Bernardino County Fire Protection District	TMartinez@SBCFire.org	(909)387- 5950
Lesley Copeland	Town of Yucca Valley	LCopeland@yucca-valley.org	(760) 369- 7209 x226
Jennifer Camacho- Curtis	City of Rancho Cucamonga	Jennifer.Camacho- Curtis@cityofrc.us	(909) 774- 2048
Sue Jones	City of Victorville	sjones@victorvilleca.gov	(760) 955- 5028
Meagan McLees	City of Upland	mmclees@ci.upland.ca.us	(909) 931- 4106