What is Next Generation 911?

Next Generation 911 -- known as NG911 in the public safety community -- is the future framework for 911 call delivery, an opportunity to upgrade the ability for people in distress to use modern technology and send data such as text messages and photos to help first responders more quickly locate people in need.

NG911 is a closed digital (IP-based) 911 network that is standards-based, scalable, secure, redundant, and built to meet the needs of public safety.

Why do we need to change to NG911?

- The current 911 system is reliable and effective, but it was designed for analog, voice-based landline calls.

- Communications technology has advanced dramatically, with new ways of transmitting information with mobile phones and other devices commonly carried by everyone from children to senior citizens. Public safety also needs to be able to take advantage of new data transmitted by these devices – including photos, videos, text messages, and web-based applications -- to better respond to people in need.

- The current 911 system is also limited in its ability to transfer calls from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, and to accommodate the advancing technologies and applications that are commonly used by people to receive information and communicate with one another. Which, in a very mobile society, is becoming increasingly important.

- To make this happen, changes will have to be made in technology, policy, funding, and how 911 communications are managed.

Benefits to upgrading to NG911

- Upgrades to the 911 system will allow Michigan residents access to 911 and public safety agencies using forms of communication and technology that are more robust, familiar, efficient, and easily accessible.

- Features such as sending texts, pictures, and videos through 911, which could provide more information to first responders helping people in distress – would be possible only in a fully deployed NG911 environment.

- The upgrade would improve the ability to send callers' critical information such as on-scene accident information and special needs data from the 911 centers to emergency responders.

- NG911 provides more opportunities for sharing data and for different systems and software applications to communicate, exchange data, and use information that has been exchanged.

- The upgrade also would mean increased network reliability and flexibility, such as:

  o Increased network reliability with improved network response times and redundant network infrastructure.

  o Direct connectivity for text-to-911.

  o Making it easier to transfer calls from one 911 center to another.

  o The ability to better route calls to additional locations to increase response levels in critical incidents and large-scale events.

  o Future ability to send photos of a crime in progress or the damage caused in a traffic crash along with a 911 call to the 911 center.