

## **Real Estate Professionals and Mobile Phones**

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It's Saturday morning and you have arrived at your open house appointment as promised. You're anxious to see the turnout after all the ads you ran during the past week. Today could be the day you close in on a sale. The homeowners have taken off and you set up your brochures and business cards.

By 11:00am several people have passed through. By noon, things slow down and the hot weather keeps everyone indoors. By 2:00pm you have not seen a soul and find yourself looking at your watch, as you have another two hours to go.

A man appears and requests a flyer, he seems friendly and genuinely interested in the home, asking questions about the local schools and shopping. But things become uncomfortable as he starts asking more personal questions and crowding your space. Your instinct tells you you're in danger, but you're somewhat comforted in the fact that you have your mobile phone with you. You'll be able to dial 911 if something goes wrong... won't you?

Realtors are one of the single largest mobile sales forces in the U.S. Many have pioneered the use of wireless technologies including the hand-held Palm Pilot, the laptop computer, and other wireless modem devices. The most popular device, however, remains the mobile phone.

According to unreleased figures supplied by the National Association of Realtors, 93 to 100 percent of Realtors have mobile phones. Moreover, over one-third of the U.S. population uses mobile phones for business purposes.

For many, mobile phones serve as a personal computer, handling everything from picture taking to web browsing. But one of the most important functions of the mobile phone has recently become a concern: contacting 911.

From a landline, this was never an issue. You dial 911 and you are connected to the closest dispatch center. Help is on the way in minutes – even if you cannot tell the operator where you are. Caller ID technology enables the dispatcher to pinpoint your location.

Mobile phones do not work in the same way. Your exact location cannot currently be mapped to your phone. Developers are working on incorporating GPS tracking, but this is still in early development and does not always work accurately indoors.

The Federal Communications Commission is developing Enhanced 911 (e911), which seeks to “improve the effectiveness and reliability of wireless 911 service by providing 911 dispatchers with additional information on wireless 911 calls.” This will be helpful for wireless users, but according to the FCC site, release is not scheduled until December 2005. Implementing the new technology required and re-training dispatchers takes time and it can only help users capable of dialing 911.

Currently, mobile phones are not created with the technology to accurately contact 911. Mobile Callback solves this problem. By calling in to the system and reporting your location, all of the information needed by dispatchers is gathered before a situation occurs. The proper PSAP (Public Safety Answering Point) number is determined based on your last confirmed location.

This service checks in on your safety and location at the time intervals you’ve chosen. If all is well, simply confirm your identity by entering your security code and keep the system active as long as you need it. If for some reason you do not respond, or enter in the wrong security code, you are given two more chances and then local police are dispatched to the location you provided.

The Mobile Callback system is a backup safety plan in the event that you cannot dial 911, and prevents calls from going to the wrong PSAP. With mobile callback activated - you never have to be alone at an open house again. With 24/7 access and unlimited calls, you can have peace of mind on the job.