



**STATE OF TENNESSEE
TENNESSEE EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS BOARD
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE & INSURANCE
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**RANDY PORTER
CHAIRMAN**

**LYNN QUESTELL
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

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Dear Business Owner:

If your place of business uses or owns a multi-line telephone system (MLTS), please read the following letter.

MLTS phone systems are not always properly configured to integrate well with 9-1-1. I urge you to work with your local 9-1-1 professionals make sure yours is.

The following issues may create problems in MLTS systems:

- First, a user may have to dial 9+9-1-1 to access an outside line to reach 9-1-1. In an emergency, this can create confusion and delay. Phone systems can and should be configured to avoid this challenge. Your vendor or IT professional can help with this.
- Second, 9-1-1 calls may not be prioritized as “urgent” in your MLTS phone system. 9-1-1 calls should always be given the highest priority status and should not be kept waiting behind other calls. This can also be addressed by your system vendor.
- Finally, in MLTS phone systems in large buildings with multiple floors or multiple sites (bank branches, college campuses, etc.), the system may not provide accurate automatic location information. The automatic location information provided to 9-1-1 may be the billing or service address rather than the actual location of an emergency. Responders could be sent to the wrong address. There are software applications that can provide this information to 9-1-1. Accurate location information is critical to effective emergency response.

Most of these corrections can be made at minimal or no cost. In any event, if lives or property are lost because users of your MLTS system could not get through to 9-1-1 or responders were sent to the wrong address the potential liability far outweighs cost of correcting these problems. We want every business and organization that uses multi-line phone systems to be aware of these issues. We encourage you to address them with your vendors.

Please plan for emergencies. Involve your vendor. Make sure your plan includes notifying your building security of emergencies – they can assist first responders. Identify the location of each handset in your MLTS system. Test your system routinely; storms can impact the configuration of your MLTS system.

If you would like to contact your local 9-1-1 call center to make arrangements to make test calls to check the location information your MLTS system is providing, please let me know and I will provide you with your local 9-1-1 call center's contact information. The City of Brentwood's 911 Center non-emergency phone number is 615-371-0160. It is illegal to dial 9-1-1 for non-emergencies, so making prior arrangements for test calls is necessary.

With kindest regards,

Lynn Questell
Executive Director