

911 – Next Generation 911

When we hear about Next Generation 911 [NextGen 911] we think about texting, but there is so much more that can be done and is being done everywhere but in the PSAP.

The ability to send text messages, photos and video clips has become commonplace for users of mobile devices but our legacy, circuit-switched 911 system does not support these forms of communication. The ability to add these capabilities to our 911 system will significantly impact emergency response: some think for the better, others disagree, but no matter how you look at it, the public demands it.

Think about:

- The school shootings and you can envision how texting to 911 will have an impact
- The Boston bombing and you can envision how photos will have an impact
- The I-35 bridge collapse and you can envision how video clips will have an impact

Now imagine:

- a device that monitors your health and can alert you to an impending heart attack
- a device that monitors the soundness of bridges and other structures
- a device that monitors your home and alerts you of a break-in, fire or other event

Will all those devices be sent to 9-1-1, probably not, but the potential is there and those are just the beginning of what a Next Generation IP-based 911 environment will look like.