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NEWS RELEASE

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‘Smart911’ Offers More Informed Emergency Response

DUBUQUE, Iowa – – Dubuque County and City of Dubuque public safety officials today announced that “Smart911” is now available to all residents of Dubuque County. This free, optional service gives citizens the opportunity to provide information to emergency responders prior to an emergency to enable faster and more informed responses to emergency situations.

Smart911 allows residents to create a safety profile for their household that can include any information they may want 9-1-1 dispatchers and first responders to have in the event of an emergency. After a profile is created, if someone from a participating household calls 9-1-1, their safety profile will immediately display on the call taker’s screen, saving critical time in response to the emergency and providing critical information to responders.

To subscribe to Smart911 service, a safety profile must be created online at www.smart911.com. Dubuque County city residents and rural residents alike are encouraged to create their safety profile with Smart911 to have their information immediately available to 9-1-1 dispatchers. Smart911 is secure and private, and information submitted is only made available to 9-1-1 call takers and responders in the event a participant calls 9-1-1. Participants must confirm the accuracy of their information at least once every six months. All information is optional and participating households have the ability to choose what details to provide.

“When you have to call 9-1-1, you are dealing with an emergency situation and even the simplest of details can be difficult to communicate in a time of panic,” said Dubuque County Emergency Communication Manager Mark Murphy. “By creating a safety profile before an emergency occurs, you are ensuring that 9-1-1 responders will have the information we need even if you can’t communicate it on that call.”

By accessing a participating household’s safety profile, responders can be aware of many details they would not have known previously. For example, now fire crews can arrive at a house fire knowing how many people live in the home and the location of bedrooms, ambulance staff can be advised of

allergies or specific medical conditions, and police can have access to a photo of a missing child in seconds rather than minutes or hours.

Safety profiles can also include photos of the home and residents, utility information and floor plans, and detailed information on residents such as medical conditions, prescriptions, and neurological/behavioral/cognitive conditions. Additional information including pets in the home, vehicle details in the event of an accident, and even emergency contacts can all be included in a safety profile. Smart911 also allows participants to link both home and work addresses to mobile phones, which can be passed on to responders in the field for a more detailed, rapid response.

“More and more people are relying on mobile phones to communicate, which only provide limited information on a 9-1-1 call,” said Murphy. “It’s critical that we can effectively utilize available technology to better respond to those individuals. Smart911 does this by automatically displaying the caller’s safety profile to the 9-1-1 dispatcher.”

Dubuque County is the first county in Iowa to offer Smart911 service. The first year of Smart911 service is being funded with forfeiture funds from the Dubuque County Drug Task Force. Annual costs of the service are \$14,000 and will be split between the Dubuque County Sheriff’s Department, City of Dubuque Police Department, and city police departments within Dubuque County. Additional background information is available online at www.cityofdubuque.org/911 or by calling the non-emergency dispatch number at 563-589-7856.

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