9-1-1 TIPS for
Non-English Speaking Callers and for Those
Who Speak English as a Second Language

If you speak English as a second language, and you are able to relay information to the
9-1-1 dispatcher in English, follow the guidelines on the reverse of this announcement.

If you speak limited English, be prepared to at least state, in English:

1. The LOCATION of the emergency and the TELEPHONE NUMBER from which you are calling,

2. Whether it is a "Fire emergency", "Medical emergency", or "Police emergency",

3. The nature of the emergency. If however, you are unable, tell the dispatcher in English, the
language you speak such as "Spanish", "Cantonese", "Vietnamese" etc.

Please do not become discouraged when you are attempting to speak English and the dispatcher
advises you that she cannot understand you. The dispatcher needs to be sure she clearly under-
stands the problem so help can be sent as quickly as possible.

To expedite emergency response, it may be necessary for the dispatcher to
handle your call by any one of the following methods:

☞ Some of our dispatchers speak languages other than English. If the dispatcher speaks
your
first language, she will communicate in that language while handling your call.

☞ The dispatcher may ask if there is an English speaking person nearby who can relay your
request for you.

☞ The dispatcher may transfer your call to a translation service. DO NOT HANG UP WHEN
THE DISPATCHER TRANSFERS YOUR CALL. Stay on the line and try to remain calm.
A translator will usually be connected to the call within seconds and will translate your
request to the dispatcher.

As long as it is safe to do so, be prepared to answer important questions asked of you from
the dispatcher. Depending on the type of emergency, the dispatcher may remain on the tele-
phone with you to ask further questions while the call is being processed and
dispatched to emergency response personnel.