



About the 3-1-1 Citizen Service Center Springfield, Massachusetts

Springfield's 3-1-1 Citizen Service Center is the first point of contact for citizens with a question or a request for non-emergency service from the City. In an effort to both reduce the number of inappropriate calls to 9-1-1 and to improve the level of service and monitoring of service provided to citizens, the City created the Center in September of 2008. Since that time the Center has answered more than 50,000 calls. As of March 2009, the City has publicly announced and made available the 3-1-1 number for residents of Springfield.

3-1-1 by Phone

Anyone within Springfield city limits can reach the Citizen Service Center by dialing 3-1-1 on a landline (Verizon, Comcast, or Vonage) or an AT&T or Sprint mobile phone. Within weeks it is anticipated that this service will be available to customers of other cell phone providers. Those outside Springfield city limits, or with a cellular service not yet supporting the 3-1-1 number, can contact the Citizen Service Center by dialing 413.736.3111.

3-1-1 Online

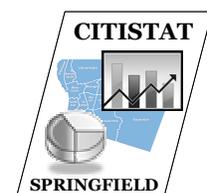
Through the new 3-1-1 link on the City's homepage, citizens can look up frequently asked questions and request services without ever needing to pick up the phone. When requesting a service online, residents can provide their email address in order to receive a confirmation number that will allow them to look up the status of their request at their convenience.

Real-time Information

With all calls logged in a GIS-enabled system and the number of hits to frequently asked questions recorded, 3-1-1 provides the City with real-time information on what is happening in the City and what citizens are concerned about. For example, if a large number of requests for a particular service are being logged for one part of the City, further investigation might be warranted. If one frequently asked question is being hit on the City's website numerous times in one or two days, it might prompt the City to use its Connect-CTY telephone system to send out an announcement relative to the particular question.

Scope of 3-1-1

Whether reporting a pothole or asking how much you owe in taxes, the 3-1-1 Citizen Service Center is equipped to answer hundreds of common questions without ever transferring a caller to another number. As of the Center's public launch in March, Customer Service Representatives can answer frequently asked questions for all City departments and can order services for the Parks, Public Works, and Housing departments as well as for the Police Ordinance Squad.



Efficiency and 3-1-1

As of March, 3-1-1 is staffed by seven full-time and one part-time customer service representative. Seven of these eight customer service representatives were existing City employees who transferred from other departments and received specialized training for their new role. Prior to 3-1-1 there were as many as 17 personnel around the City focused only on answering the phone. Long term, centralizing call answering responsibilities will reduce the number of people needed citywide to answer phones. Already the Collectors and City Clerk's offices have been able to focus their attention on serving customers at the counter because 3-1-1 is handling their phone calls.

Performance Management and 3-1-1

The 3-1-1 Citizen Service Center is a part of Springfield's CitiStat Department. 3-1-1 is integral to the City's continuing performance management and improvement efforts. All requests for service are tracked by 3-1-1 until completed and each type of work has been assigned a performance standard. For example, the standard for potholes is 48 hours. Data from 3-1-1 becomes a key measurement used in CitiStat performance review meetings.

History of 3-1-1

In 1997 the Federal Communications Commission reserved the number 3-1-1 for the use of local government entities to receive non-emergency calls. Since that time more than 100 municipalities nationwide have begun using this number to field citizens' calls and requests for service. The 3-1-1 number was created in large part to provide a non-emergency number that would be easy to remember in order to reduce the volume of non-emergency calls received in 9-1-1 dispatch centers. Springfield is the first community in western Massachusetts to begin using the 3-1-1 number.



Springfield 311 - one call to City Hall

In Springfield, Mass. dial **3-1-1** for city services

Outside Springfield call (413)736-3111

Online, visit www.springfield-ma.gov/311

