

METCAD 9-1-1

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LANGUAGE SERVICES IMPLEMENTED

METCAD CONTRACTS WITH AT&T FOR LANGUAGE LINE SERVICES

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Urbana

METCAD, the primary 9-1-1 center serving Champaign County has contracted with AT&T Language Line for the provision of interpreter services for 9-1-1 emergency calls. The implementation of this program at METCAD will greatly enhance our ability to provide 9-1-1 emergency service to non-English speaking callers.

The service is hailed as a major improvement in the emergency services offered by METCAD. Historically, non-English speaking callers presented a real challenge to the 9-1-1 Telecommunicators as they attempted to identify the callers location and the nature of their emergency. Now, with the AT&T Language Line interpreters just a phone call away, emergency services can be on the way much sooner.

Here's how it works. Upon receipt of a 9-1-1 call from a non-English speaking caller, the 9-1-1 Telecommunicator instructs the calling party to hold on the line. A special feature of the 9-1-1 Telephone Network allows the Telecommunicator to immediately conference in the AT&T Language Line center. After providing identification information, the call is immediately routed to an interpreter and the 9-1-1 call proceeds. This whole process takes, on average, less than a minute. According to AT&T Language Line,

they provide professional interpretation service from English into 140 different languages, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Since implementation in late August of this year, METCAD Telecommunicators have used the service for at least two 9-1-1 calls. On one of the calls, Telecommunicator Robert Taylor, used the service to assist him in determining a non-English speaking callers emergency. The incident turned out to be a non-emergency theft report, but without the access to the Language Line, call processing time would have been greatly increased. According to Taylor “The whole process took just a minute or so to get to the interpreter, it really worked well”.

METCAD 9-1-1 Coordinator, Greg Abbott said “We are always looking for ways to increase the level of service we can offer to the citizens of Champaign County. The AT&T Language Line is one example of a service improvement”.