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NEWS RELEASE

TO: News Media

FROM: Patrick C. Corley, Executive Director

DATE: March 24, 2016

RE: 9-1-1 Smartphone Applications

Over the next few months, several companies plan to introduce a series of free and subscription based smartphone applications that are advertised as a superior method to access 9-1-1 services. Some of these applications make some big promises that we feel are misleading to the public and we want citizens to be aware of our capabilities and use caution before choosing to use one of these phone apps in lieu of simply dialing 9-1-1. Many of these applications are geared toward areas in the country that do not have the up-to-date capabilities found here in Brazos County. We are fortunate to have a modern, up-to-date 9-1-1 system which meets the highest standards of reliability and location accuracy. Our system, which includes twenty-six 9-1-1 workstations in five dispatch centers throughout Brazos County, handled over 111,000 9-1-1 calls in 2015. About 87% of those calls originated from a wireless device. We are very confident in the abilities of our 9-1-1 system and the dedicated 9-1-1 operators answering your calls for help in Brazos County.

The 9-1-1 District feels that the use of a 9-1-1 smart phone app introduces a point of failure into the process and unduly complicates and delays what is designed to be a very simple act of dialing 9-1-1. We are not endorsing the use of 9-1-1 smart phone applications, but if you do choose to use one, please be sure to understand how that particular application works and know what limitations to expect.

In the event of an emergency, Brazos County 9-1-1 recommends that you simply call 9-1-1. We believe this to be the fastest, most accurate, and most reliable method to get the help you need.

Please contact Patrick Corley at (979) 779-0911 or pcorley@bc911.org with any questions regarding this information.