

# MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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# 119th MAINE LEGISLATURE

## FIRST REGULAR SESSION-1999

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Legislative Document

No. 1208

S.P. 419

In Senate, February 11, 1999

**An Act to Amend the Enhanced 9-1-1 Laws.**

(EMERGENCY)

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Submitted by the Department of Public Safety pursuant to Joint Rule 204.  
Reference to the Committee on Utilities and Energy suggested and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joy J. O'Brien".

JOY J. O'BRIEN  
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator KONTOS of Cumberland.  
Cosponsored by Representative MADORE of Augusta and  
Representatives: BERRY of Livermore, McALEVEY of Waterboro.

2           **Emergency preamble. Whereas,** Acts of the Legislature do not  
become effective until 90 days after adjournment unless enacted  
as emergencies; and

4           **Whereas,** many of the unorganized territories are currently  
6 known by their township and range designations; and

8           **Whereas,** the township and range designations may be  
difficult to relay accurately during emergency dispatching and  
10 response following a request for assistance using the enhanced  
9-1-1 system; and

12           **Whereas,** standardized alphabetical names for unorganized  
14 territories are desirable to promote consistency and ease of  
dispatching and response; and

16           **Whereas,** the counties have already begun addressing the  
18 unorganized territories for the purposes of the enhanced 9-1-1  
system; and

20           **Whereas,** in the judgment of the Legislature, these facts  
22 create an emergency within the meaning of the Constitution of  
Maine and require the following legislation as immediately  
24 necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and  
safety; now, therefore,

26           **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

28           **Sec. 1. 25 MRSA §2931, sub-§1,** as enacted by PL 1997, c. 291,  
30 §3, is repealed and the following enacted in its place:

32           1. Prohibited use. A person is guilty of misuse of the  
34 E-9-1-1 system if without reasonable cause the person, after  
having been forbidden to do so by a public safety answering point  
manager or administrator or a law enforcement officer:

36           A. Makes repeated telephone calls to a public safety  
38 answering point by dialing 9-1-1 to make nonemergency  
reports or inquiries; or

40           B. Causes telephone calls to be made to a public safety  
42 answering point using an alarm or other alerting device that  
automatically dials 9-1-1 and transmits a prerecorded signal  
44 or message.

46           **Sec. 2. 30-A MRSA §7501, sub-§7,** as amended by PL 1995, c.  
607, §2, is further amended to read:

48           **7. Law enforcement.** Law enforcement; and

50

2           **Sec. 3. 30-A MRSA §7501, sub-§8**, as enacted by PL 1995, c.  
607, §2, is amended to read:

4           **8. Enhanced 9-1-1 service.** Assigning and maintaining  
6 physical addresses specifically for the purpose of statewide  
enhanced 9-1-1 service. The county commissioners may enact an  
8 ordinance to establish the addressing standards and, pursuant to  
that ordinance, may assign road names to existing and proposed  
10 roads and property numbers to existing and proposed year-round  
and seasonal dwellings or structures and may install signs  
12 designating road names; and

14           **Sec. 4. 30-A MRSA §7501, sub-§9** is enacted to read:

16           **9. Standard names for unorganized territories.** The  
18 assignment of a standard alphabetical name for an unorganized  
20 territory in addition to its current township and range  
22 designation. The county commissioners may also change an  
existing standard alphabetical name if it duplicates or sounds  
similar to another territory name or is excessively cumbersome or  
lengthy.

24           A. The county commissioners shall hold a public hearing at  
26 least 7 days prior to any vote to assign or change a  
standard alphabetical name. Public notice must be given 15  
days prior to the hearing.

28           B. The following criteria must be used in the creation and  
30 assignment of a standard name.

32           (1) The standard name must be alphabetical and contain  
no numbers.

34           (2) The following sources must be used for the  
36 creation and assignment of names:

38           (a) The name of the United States Geological  
40 Survey 7.5 minute series quadrangle map that  
covers the majority of the territory;

42           (b) The principal geographic feature of the  
territory; or

44           (c) A historical place name for the territory in  
46 present day local usage, including names of Native  
American origin.

48           (3) A name that duplicates an existing name of a minor  
50 civil division, village or settlement within this State  
may not be assigned. A name that sounds similar to the

2 name of a minor civil division, village or settlement  
3 within the State must be avoided to the extent that it  
4 compromises public safety.

6 (4) If an existing standard alphabetical name for a  
7 territory duplicates or sounds similar to another  
8 territory in the county, the county commissioners may  
9 rename one of the territories. If a similar conflict  
10 exists with the name of a territory in another county,  
11 the county commissioners shall confer with the other  
12 county's county commissioners to decide which name  
13 should be changed. If they are unable to agree, the  
14 existence of a year-round population or the name's  
15 historical significance must be used to determine which  
16 name should be retained.

18 (5) The use of excessively long or cumbersome names  
19 that are difficult to use in written or spoken form  
20 must be avoided.

22 (6) A name that is derogatory to a gender or racial,  
23 ethnic or religious group is prohibited.

24 (7) A person's name may only be used if the name has  
25 direct historical significance to the territory being  
26 named and the person has been deceased for at least 5  
27 years.

30 C. The county commissioners shall notify the Office of  
31 Geographic Information Systems upon assignment or change of  
32 a standard alphabetical name for an unorganized territory.  
33 The Office of Geographic Information Systems is responsible  
34 for notifying appropriate state agencies and the United  
35 States Board on Geographical Names of a new standard  
36 alphabetical name assignment or change associated with the  
37 standard numeric geographic code for minor civil divisions  
38 in the State.

40 **Emergency clause.** In view of the emergency cited in the  
41 preamble, that section of this Act that enacts Maine Revised  
42 Statutes, Title 30-A, section 7501, subsection 9 takes effect  
43 when approved.

44  
45 **SUMMARY**

46  
47 The bill prohibits the use of a device that dials 9-1-1 and  
48 transmits a prerecorded message to a public safety answering  
point after being forbidden to do so. This bill also provides

2 for the standard alphabetical naming of unorganized territories  
by the county commissioners.