

NEW MINNESOTA 911 LAW TAKES EFFECT

Governor Tim Pawlenty signed the PBX bill on May 29, 2004. The law regulates the owners and operators of multi-line telephone systems (MLTS) or Private Branch Exchange (PBX) systems that are used in private businesses, hotels, residential units, and educational institutions, including schools and colleges. This law also applies to large Centron systems and IP soft switches.

Effective Immediately

User Education

Each phone system operator must demonstrate or otherwise inform each new telephone system user how to call for emergency assistance from that particular multi-line telephone system. The provision will begin to assure that every Minnesotan who goes to work or school will receive the information that they need to know how to dial 911 from their location.

The law requires no particular method for demonstrating or otherwise informing each new phone user how to call for emergency assistance. Thus the information may be supplied either orally, in writing, or both. To the extent that it would be useful to document that the information has been provided to each employee, it would probably be advisable to provide written instructions to new employees as matter of course, and/or video tape a demonstration and include mandatory viewing of the tape (or an internet streaming version) as part of each employee's orientation.

Normally the rule is if an employee dials 9 to make a local call. He/She must dial 9 – 911. If an employee is not required to dial 9 for local calls, he /she can dial simply 911.

HR staff should co-ordinate with telephone systems managers to review the dialing information to new and current phone users. Please make sure that 911 dialing instructions are made a part of new employee orientation.