

NUMBERING YOUR HOUSE? IT'S AS EASY AS 1-2-3

By: Chris Floyd
Emergency Services Director
Capital Area Chapter
American Red Cross

"It's a doublewide and you can't miss it. There's usually a van parked outside."
"You'll know you're at the right place if a white dog is sleeping in the driveway."
"It's right next to Miss Annie's. Everyone knows where she lives."

If you're like most people, you've tried to follow directions like this. (You might even have given out directions like this.) You probably missed the doublewide, because there were a dozen of them in the neighborhood, or they sold the van last week. Maybe the white dog decided to sleep under the porch that day. Or there were three women called "Miss Annie" in town

A delay in finding the right house can be frustrating any time. In an emergency it can be deadly.

Emergency vehicles like fire engines, ambulances, and police cars need clear directions to follow. That is the reason behind the 9-1-1 numbering system in place in this community. The

9-1-1 numbering system assigns a specific address consisting of a unique number and the street name to each home and business. Everyone needs to know their 9-1-1 address when they call for help, but just knowing your own address is not enough, you need to display it so that emergency vehicles can find your address in a hurry.

Each building should have its number posted clearly on the front door, over the doorway, or elsewhere on the front. A number on the mailbox or painted on the curb is fine, but the number must also be posted on the house in an area easily seen from the street. Use large numbers that are easy to read. Four inches is often a good size. Use contrasting colors that show up against the house, and keep trees or shrubs from covering the numbers.

Lives and property can be saved simply by posting adequate house numbers where emergency personnel can find them. Be sure your house is properly numbered. It's an easy and important step toward making your neighborhood disaster resistant.