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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – June 26, 2019**

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**SAVE 9-1-1 CALLS FOR TRUE EMERGENCIES** - to avoid overwhelming the 9-1-1 system over this year's Fourth of July holiday, KITSAP 911 is encouraging the public to call 360-307-5811 with non-emergency complaints.

(BREMERTON, Wash.) – The Fourth of July holiday is notoriously a busy time for emergency responders. 9-1-1 centers are universally inundated with 9-1-1 calls.

Following the overwhelming call volume that nearly paralyzed our system with non-emergency calls during the 2015 holiday, officials at KITSAP 911 are asking the public to think carefully before calling 9-1-1 during this year's Fourth of July holiday. Unless there is an immediate danger or life-threatening situation, the public should avoid calling 9-1-1. This allows callers with true emergencies to reach 9-1-1 when needed.

**For non-emergency complaints, officials have set up a special non-emergency line -- 360-307-5811 -- that will be in operation from Monday July 1, 2019 at 0800 through Monday July 8, 2019 at 8 AM.** This number will ring into the 9-1-1 center but the calls will be handled as a lower priority than calls made to 9-1-1.

Due to the heavy workload associated with the Fourth of July holiday, law enforcement agencies must prioritize their workload and their ability to respond based on the level of threat to the safety of citizens and property. Protecting lives and preserving property will be the priority. Law enforcement agencies within Kitsap County will not be responding to firework complaints that pose no imminent threat to life or property. This allows personnel resources to be utilized for emergency responses. Residents may call their local law enforcement office during business hours for further information on responses to firework complaints in their area.

If a caller believes that fireworks are posing an imminent threat of fire or injury, they should dial 9-1-1. We ask residents to really consider whether their complaint is worth potentially blocking 9-1-1 access from someone who is having a true emergency before calling 9-1-1.

**To obtain information on legal versus illegal fireworks in Kitsap County, please visit**  
<https://www.kitsapgov.com/dcd/Pages/Fireworks.aspx>.

Weather conditions greatly impact the dangers associated with fireworks. Many local jurisdictions have the authority to institute firework bans due to dangerously dry conditions. **Be aware of conditions and laws prior to lighting any fireworks.** Every year, thousands suffer consumer fireworks-related burns and eye-injuries. Across the United States, about 18,000 structure fires are caused by fireworks annually. Here in Kitsap County we see fireworks-related injuries and fires every year. We encourage residents to celebrate our country's birth by supporting the spectacular fireworks shows produced by professionals and licensed pyrotechnicians.

June 29th: Bremerton Bridge Blast [www.bremertonbridgeblast.com](http://www.bremertonbridgeblast.com)

July 3rd: Fireworks over Liberty Bay in Poulsbo [www.vikingfest.org](http://www.vikingfest.org)

July 4th: Kingston 4th of July Celebration [www.kingston4thofjuly.com](http://www.kingston4thofjuly.com)

July 4th: Wave Grand Fireworks Show over the Sinclair Inlet (Port Orchard) [www.fathomsoffun.org](http://www.fathomsoffun.org)

July 4th: Clearwater Casino 4th of July [www.clearwatercasino.com/events/](http://www.clearwatercasino.com/events/)

Local law enforcement and fire agencies worked together with KITSAP 911 to develop a comprehensive plan to work through the heavy and dynamic workload associated with the Fourth of July holiday. Kitsap 911 increases staffing to manage the heavier workload. Kitsap 911 prepares as much as possible in advance to ensure our core mission is met. Kitsap 911 is thankful for our law and fire/EMS partnerships and wishes our responders and our community a happy and safe Fourth of July.

KITSAP 911 provides 9-1-1 call receiving as well as dispatching for law enforcement, fire, emergency medical and animal control services in the Kitsap County region, including unincorporated Kitsap County the cities or Bainbridge Island, Bremerton, Port Orchard and Poulsbo and the Suquamish and Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribes.