



911 Assist™
Public Safety Access Points
Frequently Asked Questions

Please refer to the website: www.syncmyride.com for more information about SYNC®, including consumer FAQ's on 911 Assist.

FAQ's:

Q: What is SYNC?

A: SYNC is a fully-integrated, in-car communications and entertainment system that gives drivers hands-free voice-activated control over their mobile phones and digital music players. After an initial one time setup, SYNC is designed to connect to a driver's paired phone at vehicle start for hands-free communication over the vehicle's in-car microphone and sound system when requested.

Q: What is 911 Assist?

A: 911 Assist is a SYNC software feature that uses a vehicle occupant's Bluetooth® paired and connected mobile phone to dial 9-1-1 in the event of a vehicle crash with an airbag deployment, or on certain vehicles, when the fuel pump shut-off is triggered (can be caused by a rear collision).

Q: How does 911 Assist work?

A: SYNC with 911 Assist can help vehicle occupants in a crash by placing an assisted call directly to 9-1-1. In the event of airbag deployment or on certain vehicles the activation of the fuel pump shut-off (which can be triggered in rear collisions), SYNC speaks to vehicle occupants and tells them that an assisted call will be made to 9-1-1. It also gives instructions on how to cancel the call. SYNC will wait approximately ten seconds and if a vehicle occupant does not cancel the call, SYNC will place a call to 9-1-1 via a connected Bluetooth mobile phone. The call is a standard wireless call directly to 9-1-1. Once connected, SYNC will alert the 9-1-1 Call Taker with a pre-recorded message that a vehicle crash has occurred. It will provide touch tone command instructions for either opening the line immediately or for receiving more information (if available). After opening the line, SYNC provides hands-free voice communication with the vehicle occupants. The 9-1-1 Call Taker can evaluate the situation and provide assistance as needed.

Q: What is unique about SYNC with 911 Assist?

A: SYNC with 911 Assist can help vehicle occupants by placing a hands-free wireless call over their personal mobile phone, contacting 9-1-1 directly over trunk lines without the delay of going through a third party call center.

Q: How is this different from any other wireless call?

A: A call received by a PSAP is no different from a traditional wireless call. These calls are hands-free assisted wireless calls. A Call Taker will have the same tools available to determine the caller's location and call back number.

Q: What makes assisted technology such as 911 Assist different from an auto-dialer device?

A: 911 Assist is a feature that assists the occupants in placing a call to 9-1-1 and provides a 10 second window for occupants to make a decision to cancel the call before it is placed. 911 Assist is installed with a defaulted "OFF" setting at the factory. The feature must be set "ON" voluntarily by the user of the primary phone paired with SYNC. As any vehicle occupant has the ability to cancel the call before it is initiated, the emergency call will either be the deliberate decision of an occupant after a crash or the deliberate decision of an incapacitated occupant made before the accident and their incapacitation.

Q: Is there a potential for unintended activation, placing an unwanted call to 9-1-1?

A: The system can only be triggered when the vehicle is powered on and the customer's personal cell phone is available and a qualified crash event occurs, so there is little chance that a call can be placed from an unattended vehicle. Ford exercises great care in designing airbag and fuel shut-off calibrations to prevent unintended activation. These systems are among the most reliable of any system in Ford Motor Company vehicles, as unintended activation may lead to safety concerns. Therefore, Ford is confident that 911 Assist will only trigger after a moderate to severe crash – only when vehicle occupants are genuinely in need of police or emergency assistance. Moreover, the feature is defaulted to "OFF" from the factory so there is no possibility of unintended calls until a customer takes possession of the vehicle and enables the feature. Finally, prior to a 9-1-1 call the vehicle occupant has the option to cancel the call or allow it to be placed during the 10 second window. Therefore, Ford is confident that there will not be unintended activation of 911 Assist calls. Ford believes that 911 Assist will provide a significant safety benefit without burdening Public Safety Answering Points (PSAPs).

Q: When is the SYNC 911 Assist Feature available?

A: 911 Assist will be available in the Fall of 2008 on selected 2009 model Ford, Lincoln and Mercury vehicles. It will be available as a dealer software upgrade at no charge from Ford in the Fall of 2008 for SYNC equipped vehicles already on the road, including 2008 models. Dealer charges may apply.

Q: Where is the SYNC 911 Assist Feature available?

A: The SYNC 911 Assist Feature is available in the United States and Canada. The SYNC 911 Assist feature is not available in Mexico or the US Territories.

Q: Is there a possibility that a Call Taker may hear a message from SYNC in French?

A: Vehicles manufactured for sale in Canada only will have all PSAP messages provided in an alternating fashion in both American English and Canadian French. Vehicles manufactured for sale in the United States will provide information in American English only.

Q: When will Communication centers start to receive calls from SYNC equipped vehicles?

A: Call takers may start receiving calls from SYNC-equipped vehicles late in 2008. As the feature is new it will take some time to penetrate the market. Ford expects to have over 1 million SYNC units on the road in the beginning of 2009. However, the majority of these units were sold prior to the release of 911 Assist. SYNC is upgradeable so certain vehicles sold (starting with SYNC equipped 2008 models) may be updated if consumers take their vehicles back to their dealer. Expect the population of 911 Assist equipped vehicles to grow in the coming months and years increasing the likelihood of 911 Assist calls.

Q. If it's a bad enough crash, can the system be damaged or disabled?

A. Vehicle accidents are extremely unpredictable events. For the system to operate the vehicle's electrical system (including the battery), the wireless service provider's signal, and a paired mobile phone all must be available. The cell phone needs to be on and operational with the ability to place a call, Bluetooth-enabled, paired and connected with the SYNC system and within range or near the vehicle after it comes to rest. Depending on the severity of the accident, the occupant's cell phone or the vehicle's systems could be damaged to such an extent that 911 Assist would not be able to initiate or maintain a call to 9-1-1. In the event that the cell phone is operational and 911 Assist is unable to initiate a call, occupants would still be able to call 9-1-1 directly using any available wireless phone. If SYNC is disconnected it will not interfere with an occupant's ability to use a cell phone to make a call, just like when using SYNC's regular cell phone calling feature. If a call taker is disconnected or has lost communication they may choose to call back if the ANI (phone number) is available.

Q: What is 'privacy mode'?

A: 'Privacy mode' is essentially turning off SYNC Bluetooth and returning the call to the occupant's cell phone handset; i.e. -- an ordinary cell phone call. Vehicle occupants may switch a call from an active Bluetooth-connected, hands-free environment to the handset for a more private conversation in case there is excessive background noise. Remember users can also turn off the vehicle and open the door (ending accessory delay mode) to quickly turn off power to SYNC and transfer an ongoing call seamlessly to the connected handset without interruption. If for any reason you get disconnected you may call back. Please note that touch tone commands, e.g., for GPS coordinates (in certain future models), do not work in 'privacy mode' or when the vehicle power is off.

Q: If vehicle occupants have more than one previously paired phone in the vehicle, will there be multiple 911 Assist calls to 9-1-1?

A: No. The 911 Assist service will attempt to place the 9-1-1 call using whichever paired mobile phone is currently connected to SYNC via Bluetooth. If that phone is not available or can not make a connection SYNC will attempt to connect with another previously paired phone. SYNC can only be connected to one phone at a time and only attempts to call 9-1-1 after the connection is made.

Q. Will SYNC with 911 Assist have GPS capabilities to tell call takers where the vehicle is located after a crash?

A. Call Takers will be able to find the vehicle if the driver's cell phone and cellular network transmits location data in accordance with the wireless phase1/phase 2 requirements. Future models of Ford Motor Company vehicles may have the capability to transmit vehicle GPS location data to PSAPs. On these vehicles, location data may be retrieved from SYNC if you have touch tone capabilities and you are able to press "1". SYNC will then verbally communicate location information. Please remember that at any time a call taker may push "0" to open the communication line with the vehicle occupants. These verbal instructions are spoken by 911 Assist during the call, so there is no need to remember them.

Q. What has Ford Motor Company done to ensure that this feature is appropriate, will not burden PSAPs and other emergency services, and will improve public safety?

A. Ford Motor Company has and continues to work with NENA and APCO so that 911 Assist meets the needs of Public Safety Answering Points and the general public. So far, this has included receiving input on current and future system features, and the design inputs and system interactions to make 911 Assist convenient and useful to PSAPs. Ford has also partnered with these organizations to provide educational materials such as this training package in order to educate Call Takers. Combined with the system precautions to prevent unattended activation, Ford is confident that 911 Assist will only activate when vehicle occupants are genuinely in need of police or emergency assistance and that the communications will be intuitive and timely to PSAPs.