

**Important General Information for
Government Emergency Telecommunications Service (GETS) and
Wireless Priority Service (WPS)**

1. GETS and WPS are designed to be used only during an emergency and when normal calling methods are unsuccessful due to network congestion (e.g., caller receives a fast busy signal or message like, “*Your call cannot be completed at this time. Please try again later.*”).
2. Carry your GETS card and WPS phone at all times – you never know when or where you may need it.
3. Test your GETS card and WPS phone periodically throughout the year. Testing helps you become familiar with how to make GETS and WPS calls.
 - a. Test GETS on every landline and cellular phone you might use in an emergency. Use 703-818-3924 as the destination number.
 - b. Practice using WPS (*272) with your GETS card for end-to-end priority handling.
 - c. If you find a problem while using GETS or WPS, report it immediately to 1-800-818-4387 or 703-818-4387.
4. There are alternative ways to make a GETS call. See the back of your GETS card for a complete list in case the primary 1-710-NCS-GETS does not work. (Note: the primary number provides the greatest amount of priority enhancements to your call.)
5. In case of network congestion, GETS and WPS will place your call in a queue (on hold) and will give you the first available circuit. While waiting, you will hear silence, or perhaps a series of beeps. Stay on the line until your call completes. Depending on the circumstances, this could take several minutes.
6. You must have a dial tone to use GETS. Because dial tones are assigned on a first-come first-served basis, during times of congestion you may have to wait a few seconds to receive one.
7. GETS and WPS are enhancements to the public switched telephone network (PSTN). If the network (including cellular towers) is damaged (e.g., due to power failure or physical damage) and basic service is not working, GETS and WPS may not work. If possible, try relocating a couple of miles away where you may get cellular signal from another tower that is operational.
8. Do NOT use GETS or WPS to dial 911. Conflicts between GETS or WPS and 911 call processing may cause the call to fail. Even if it does complete, the 911 operator will not receive your location information.
9. GETS will not allow you to dial a toll-free destination number. Find out in advance the local translations of any 800, 888, 877, 866, or 855 numbers you might need in an emergency and publish them along with the toll-free numbers in your emergency planning documents.
10. WPS does not guarantee end-to-end priority call treatment, especially when calling a landline as your destination number. Always use your GETS card when placing a WPS call to ensure you receive the highest level of call priority.
11. Cellular callers without WPS can still use GETS, but must recognize that congestion on the wireless network might prevent their call from reaching the GETS platform. However, even though using GETS without WPS will not provide priority treatment in the originating cellular network, if the destination number is served by a WPS provider, GETS is designed to trigger priority features in the destination wireless network-- especially helpful if the destination network is encountering congestion.
12. If you are calling from behind a PBX that has stopped working, try using a phone that is connected directly to the central office. Often, fax machines, modems, payphones and Telecommunication Devices for the Deaf (TDD) use such lines. Emergency managers should ensure their offices have access to direct lines to the phone company’s central office and should record their locations and numbers in the office’s emergency planning document.