



## City of Grinnell

...Jewel of the Prairie

Police Department  
1020 Spring Street  
Grinnell, IA 50112

---

Phone: 641-236-2670  
FAX: 641-236-2652  
ORI#IA0790100

July 18, 2010

### Media Release

#### **SUBJECT: Grinnell/Poweshiek County Combined Dispatch Protocols**

The Grinnell Police and Fire Departments have been working many years on methods to improve response times, efficiency and ultimately public safety by enhancing dispatching procedures. To achieve this, on Monday, August 2, 2010 at 8:00 AM, the Grinnell Police and Fire Department will combine their dispatch with the Poweshiek County Sheriff's Office.

For decades, Grinnell Police civilian staff has dispatched police and fire Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM. Firefighters dispatch during nights, weekends and holidays. All Grinnell dispatchers have been expected to handle Police and Fire dispatch in addition to their regular duties such as maintaining computer systems, filing records, answering administrative phones, handling walk-in inquires from citizens, preparing payroll, handling general office duties, transcribing police reports, etc. Managing several administrative functions (multi-tasking) while emergency dispatching is not desired due to the increase in seriousness and quantity of calls the Grinnell area community has experienced. This lends credibility to the need to minimize "other activity" for dispatchers so they can focus on the task at hand; that is taking emergency phone calls and dispatching them, as well as coordinating radio traffic. For the past many years, Grinnell area 911 calls have been received at the Sheriff's Office. The caller is then transferred to Grinnell dispatchers who subsequently send police or fire response, which causes a time delay. Further, when a fire call is received, Police Officers are presently required to return to the Public Safety Building to dispatch in the Firefighter's absence. This slows fire response and reduces the police department's ability to assist on fire calls or simultaneously conduct other needed law enforcement services.

On August 2<sup>nd</sup>, the community will continue to receive 24/7 police and fire response but a few organizational changes will occur.

The Grinnell Public Safety Building will change its administrative office hours from 24/7 to Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, closed on, nights, weekends and holidays. The public will continue to have access to copies of fire or police reports, fingerprinting and other administrative needs during office hours. Requests for reports can also be accomplished by mail.

The phone numbers will change as well and citizens are requested to make a note of it. For Police, Fire or Ambulance EMERGENCY response the person should dial 911. For NON-EMERGENCY response (report a crime not in progress, request to talk to a police officer, animal complaints, report any incident of a non-emergency nature, etc.) the caller should dial dispatch at 641-623-5679. Both 911 and 641-623-5679 will be received at the Poweshiek County Sheriff's Office. They will immediately dispatch police or fire personnel to respond to the incident or transfer the caller to the ambulance dispatcher.

The new administrative office numbers for Grinnell Police is 641-236-2670 and for Grinnell Fire 641-236-2688. Citizens should call these numbers for administrative purposes only such as requesting burn permits, inquiring about obtaining copies of police or fire reports, fingerprints, etc. The administrative offices will no longer have the capability to dispatch police, fire or ambulance response. The old police number (236-2650) and old fire number (236-2655) will be phased-out and disconnected in the future, so citizens are discouraged from using them.

When citizens visit the Grinnell Public Safety building after officer hours and need police or fire assistance, they can use a phone located in a red box on the wall of the vestibule at the main entrance. That phone is an auto-dial to the Poweshiek County dispatcher. The dispatcher will send police or fire personnel to respond to the caller. Again, requests of an administrative nature should contact the Public Safety Building during office hours.

Simply put, a person will call 911 for emergencies or call the Sheriff's office non-emergency number for other requests for police and fire response with the goal of improving the level of service our community expects and deserves.

Jody Matherly  
Chief of Police

Dan Sicard  
Fire Chief