The number to know

911 system goes into effect in Lexington County Monday

Beginning Monday, Lexington County residents will only have to dial 911 to summon help for emergency services such as fire, ambulance or police assistance from anywhere in the county.

The computerized dispatching system is designed to ensure quicker and better emergency service countywide any time of the day.

Under the system, when an emergency call is received, the telephone number and location of the caller will be flashed on a computer screen in the dispatch offices at the Lexington County Administration Building, and dispatch offices in Cayce, West Columbia, and Batesburg-Leesville.

When dialing 911, the caller must stay on the line long enough for a dispatcher to answer. This will allow the system to record the vital information such as the telephone number and location of the caller. It's best if the caller can stay on the line long enough to instruct the dispatcher as to the nature of the call.

The system was approved by the state Public Service Commission in February 1985 for Lexington and Richland counties.

Lexington County telephone customers are funding the implementation and maintenance of the system through a monthly charge on their telephone bills.

Until November, telephone subscribers paid a monthly charge of 43 cents to install the system and will pay a lesser amount of 35 cents beginning this month to maintain the system.

A dedication ceremony to recognize the implementation of the system is scheduled for Monday at 8 a.m. in the Council Chambers on the sixth floor of the Lexington County Administration Building.

The ceremony is open to the public.