

What Do I Say In A 911 Call?

When home invasion occurs, you want help. Violent conflicts happen quickly and they are over in seconds. You will want to call 911 to get police rolling in your direction. Remember, the police have no specific requirement to safeguard you as an individual citizen.

Police aren't required to protect you. In *Warren v. District of Columbia* (1981), the D.C. Court of Appeals ruled, "official police personnel and the government employing them are not generally liable to victims of criminal acts for failure to provide adequate police protection . . . a government and its agents are under no general duty to provide public services, such as police protection, to any particular citizen." In *Bowers v. DeVito* (1982), the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals ruled, "[T]here is no constitutional right to be protected by the state against being murdered by criminals or madmen."

Your 911 call will be recorded and will serve as an electronic witness to the event. It will be introduced as evidence. Let it be a strong witness for YOU. Operators will need the basics

 Who

 Where

 What is the emergency

Consider this format:

 *"This is John Doe at 123 Elm Street. Someone just broke into my home.*

 *I have my family in the master bathroom.*

 *I am armed and will shoot. Please send the police quickly".*

The operator will try and engage you in conversation and keep you on the line. Tell them you are putting the phone down. If someone tries to enter your safe room, warn them loudly, "Don't come in here. I have a gun. Leave my house." If they comply, your next fight is with your insurance company to replace your stuff. If they enter your safe room, defend yourself and your family. **It is "an eye for an eye", not "an eye for a TV."** You can defend yourself, but not your belongings.

The police will arrive with very little information. Pick up the phone and ask for the officer's name and badge number. Let the operator know where you are in the home and what you are wearing. The police will react to the information they have. If they know nothing, they will treat you as the bad guy.

Do not get into the chat mode. Anything you say or do will be retold to the press and to the court. You do not have to tell them anything. If your wits are still about you consider:

 They broke into my home

 I was afraid for my life and the life of my family

 They attacked me

 I'll sign a complaint

 There is the evidence

 I need to talk to my lawyer

 I do not consent to any search

Then shut up! Don't talk to neighbors or to ANYONE ELSE. Contact your lawyer. (Look for the article on developing a relationship with a lawyer coming soon to this web site.) You may be arrested on the spot and questioned. Again, you do not have to say anything.

This is one of the hardest lessons to get across. SAY NOTHING. The United States Concealed Carry Association has a card you can present to the police that sums all this up for you. You can just hand them the card and sit down.

Remember: Have a plan, practice it with your family, and execute it!