***Media Relations Information for 02/08/2012***

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**LPPD Dispatch Center hopes to curb 911 misdials**

Last month, members of the La Porte Police Telecommunications Center received a total of 1,496 emergency 911 calls for police, fire, or ambulance service. After review of the call totals, however, it has been discovered that as much as 10% of these “emergency” calls were not emergencies at all and instead were attributed to “pocket dialing.”

The term pocket dialing has unfortunately become a common slang term among emergency service dispatch professionals in both the U.S. and Canadian provinces. It refers to someone who has accidentally dialed 911 by either sitting on their phone or reaching into their pocket, backpack, purse, or other container, and inadvertently pressing a speed-dial key for emergency service. All can agree that, in an emergency, 911 telephone services are a valuable tool which aid both citizens and police alike. However, whenever a 911 call is made accidentally or even as a prank, the call diverts the time and attention of one or more police dispatchers who still must address the call and determine its validity.

Of course the potential for “pocket dialing” will continue to increase as the prevalence of cell phones and other wireless devices in our society skyrockets along with their various upgrades in quick-dial and pre-programmed 911 features. Therefore, to combat such misdials, police ask that citizens utilize the “lock” feature on all devices which have telephone service. Such a basic, yet preventative, action holds the potential to lighten the load for already burdened emergency service dispatchers, while also allowing police, fire, and ambulance crews to arrive at emergency scenes much faster.

The entire La Porte Police Telecommunications staff extends their gratitude in advance as they continue to make every effort to serve their community as efficiently and effectively as possible. For more information on LPPD’s emergency operations, please contact the Support Services Center at 281-842-3177.