



The Leader in E911 Solutions

Case Study: Corporate Campus

“We’re doing something with a soul to it. From a moral standpoint, E911 is the right thing to do. It’s about using technology to protect people, to help them if and when something goes wrong,”
said Rhonda Shearer, Bandag’s senior telecommunications specialist.

The Problem:

Bandag Inc., a Fortune 500 manufacturer in Muscatine, Iowa, sought a telecommunications solution to solve the problem of emergency respondents showing up at the wrong location when someone called 911 in an emergency. With eight buildings served by two Avaya Definity PBXs in an extended corporate campus, it wanted to enhance protections for its 750 employees, a mixture of office staff and plant employees.

Because a standard 911 call from a corporation automatically transmits the billing address for the company’s telephone system, not necessarily the building where the caller is located, 911 dispatchers were sometimes giving emergency respondents the wrong address. Police, paramedics and firefighters were arriving at one building when the problem was actually at another site. In one instance, when 911 was called to respond to an employee who was suffering a heart attack, paramedics went to the building 10 miles away from the employee was located.

Bandag made a corporate commitment to implement an enhanced 911, or E911, solution. It understood that providing the exact location, including exact phone number, office and floor location, would enhance the likelihood of a safe, speedy response. Moreover, with about 20 to 30 telephone changes in any given month, it didn’t want a labor-intensive solution. It sought to automate the process of keeping station location data current.

The Solution:

Bandag researched the dilemma and realized new technologies would enable it to implement a software solution that would extend the capabilities of its Avaya PBXs. The company identified and chose RedSky Technologies as its vendor because the E911 software provider had implemented the technology at many other organizations with enterprise telecommunications environments. RedSky’s E911 Manager application tied directly to the PBX and systematically monitored moves, adds and changes.

“The automated functionality of not having to update another database made RedSky’s solution attractive,” said Rhonda Shearer, Bandag’s senior telecommunications specialist. “Now, we make a single change in our PBX and it automatically uploads into our E911 system. It’s not a burden on our staff.”

Recognizing the need to get buy-in on multiple fronts, Bandag launched a cross-functional team of both internal and external stakeholders. Telecom managers who were leading the project invited

Bandag facilities managers, legal and risk management personnel, and telecom administrators to join Muscatine fire department authorities and RedSky personnel.

To start, the team got input from local fire marshals on how to properly label each building and how to characterize location data within the building. The fire department's advice: keep things simple. Telecom personnel went through each of its eight buildings and inventoried location data for each phone from which a 911 call could be made. Descriptive labels were identified for its eight buildings, and floors were divided into quadrants – "SE" (for southeast), "SW" (for southwest), "NE" (for northeast), "NW" (for northwest). RedSky's solution now enables Bandag to feature building, floor and quadrant information for each telephone line – e.g., "HQ, 2505 N. Highway 61, 3rd fl., NW."

"When we launched the project, we tried to think like a fireman," Shearer explained." What you call your locations must make sense to the people who arrive to help."

The E911 system was launched with a "Lunch and Learn" program to brief employees. Bandag's intranet site also was enhanced to feature all the details. They also created maps of its campus with the names of all their buildings, then made this information available to local emergency response teams.

The Impact: E911 solution successfully doing the job at Bandag

With its E911 system in place, Muscatine paramedics, police and firefighters no longer show up at the wrong building when a Bandag worker or guest calls 911. As such, emergency response now occurs in a much timelier fashion. Bandag is believed to be the first company in Iowa to implement an enterprise-wide, automated solution.

Employees have been briefed on how to handle emergencies, including dialing procedures and what to do when they call for help, as part of Bandag's crisis response plan. Employees have been told to remain at their desks after they call 911, unless they are informed otherwise, since rescuers will know exactly where they're located. Bandag facilities managers liked so much how E911 station location data was labeled that they revised their own building identification codes.

Bandag's E911 solution is now tied directly to the regional emergency database that is used to provide location data to the public safety answering point (PSAP). Each day, Bandag automatically receives a confirmation report that new E911 information has been accepted and validated at the regional E911 database.

"One of the highlights of my career was the day I stood behind the 911 dispatcher and watched location details from our test call show up on the screen," Shearer said.

With a fully automated, fully integrated E911 system in place, Bandag is living up to its corporate commitment to protect its employee and is driving home the fact that safety indeed pays. Fire marshals were thrilled to be a part of the project, offering total support from beginning to end.