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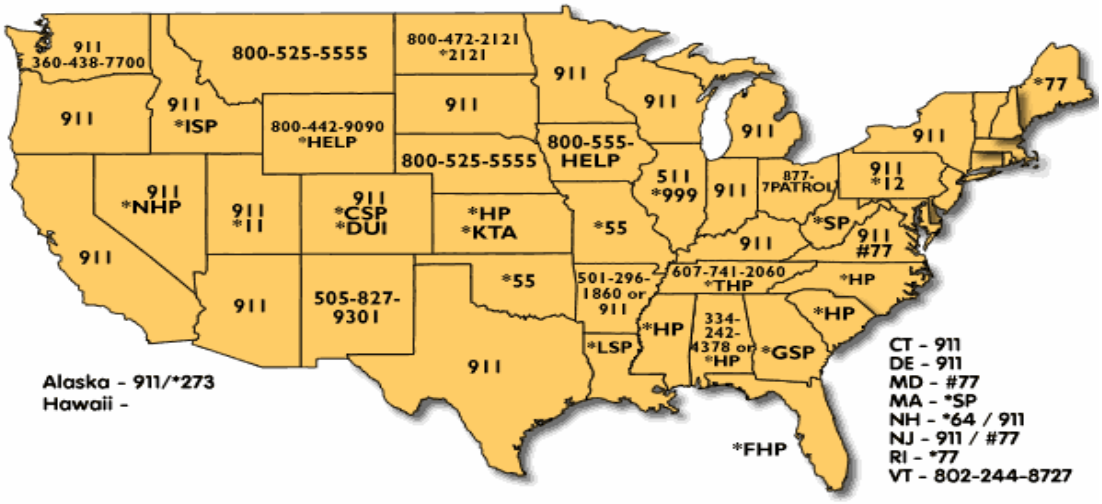
SIP TIP: WHO ARE YOU GOING TO CALL (IN AN EMERGENCY) WHEN ON THE ROAD!!

An **urban legend** has circulated for many years claiming that motorists can dial #77 or *77 to reach the police, or to determine if the unmarked police car behind them is real, or .... etc.

As you can see from this map, #77/*77 is **not** the universal number for the police. Either dial 911 or determine your state's local highway emergency number.



Although 911 has been designated as the "official" number for reporting emergencies, it's by no means universal, either for wired or wireless phones. There are still many counties in the U.S. that have no 911 service of any kind. There are also presumably many locations where 911 does not work for a wireless phone user because the wireless carrier hasn't enabled 911 in its routing equipment.

More to the point, when dialing 911 from a wireless phone, you might be routed to a local law enforcement agency, a county sheriff or to the state-level law enforcement agency (state patrol, state police, highway patrol, etc.). For someone traveling on state or interstate highways, this lack of standardization has created the need for **highway**-related emergency numbers. That's what this map attempts to depict.

The map shows the **highway-related emergency** numbers that have been created to allow motorists with a wireless phone to reach the agency that patrols the state's highways and interstates. Naturally, anyone could dial this number from a wireless phone for a local, city emergency. However, they'd reach a state-level law enforcement agency dispatcher who would transfer them to the appropriate local agency. Conversely, a motorist could dial 911 and a local dispatcher would have to transfer the caller to the state-level law enforcement agency...confused?

Lastly, if you're traveling adjacent to a state boundary (such as Virginia, Maryland and DC), dialing one of these special numbers could connect you with... well, who knows which state or agency you'd hear on the phone? That's the disadvantage of non-standard numbers, and of wireless phones whose signal can go in all directions.

DRIVE SAFELY - BUT KNOW WHO TO CALL IN AN EMERGENCY!