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Hayward Police and Fire Departments adopt What3Words application as locating tool during emergencies

HAYWARD, Calif., July 10, 2024, The Hayward Police and Fire Departments are officially adopting [what3words](#) as a tool to help locate callers faster in an emergency. Being able to locate a caller during an emergency is essential and the faster the location is confirmed, the faster help can be dispatched. What3words enables callers and dispatchers to communicate precise locations with the application of this new tool.

What3words is a geocoding system designed to provide a simple and precise location on earth. What3words divides the world into a grid of approximately 10-foot by 10-foot squares and each square has a unique combination of three words. This system simplifies finding exact locations, even in rural areas or at addresses that are lacking or confusing.

HPD and HFD are able to utilize what3words in three different ways for emergency response:

1. The Hayward Police and Fire Departments have built what3words into its Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system. Hayward Dispatchers are able to quickly create an incident precisely at the caller's location despite no associated address. The location can then be shared with responding resources on their mobile data computer maps, which means helicopters and ground resources are able to quickly navigate to a caller's exact location.
2. If a caller's location information is not available, the dispatcher is able to send the caller a text message with a link. When clicked, a webpage is opened showing the caller's current what3words location.
3. If a caller knows the what3words address of the emergency (for e.g. they have the what3words app downloaded, or they have seen a physical sign with the what3words location

displayed), they can give the dispatcher the three word address over the phone; then the dispatcher can look up and verify the caller's location.



Hayward Communications Operators have already tested the program and have had success with emergency calls in the city.

For example, a dispatcher recently received a 9-1-1 call from a man who sounded as though he was in distress, possibly suffering a medical emergency. What3words software was utilized to locate the man and dispatchers were able to determine his exact address. The man was quickly located and received prompt medical treatment, thanks to the what3words locating tool.

The Hayward Police and Fire Departments encourage you to download the what3words app and think of it as another tool to help expediate help when you most need it.

Interested community members can download the app for [iOS](#) and [Android](#) or use the free [online map](#) to find and share their precise location. The app even works offline, making it ideal for use in remote areas or areas with poor internet connection.

To learn more, visit our website: [What3Words](#)