

SKY-HI NEWS



Don't take your address for granted

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Fully Involved

September is National Preparedness Month, and families and businesses are taking action to help themselves and their communities be more prepared for all types of emergencies.

What steps can you take to be prepared? We'll be answering that question in this and future columns, with the first subject being your physical home address.

You may know your physical home address, but do your children, your guests, or your tenants? Emergency services personnel in Grand County use a variety of means to find a person in need of urgent assistance. Some have an intimate knowledge of the vast network of roads that thread throughout the county. County GIS databases and internet map web sites such as Google Maps are also used.

If you live in an incorporated city within the county your address is your house number, the street you live on, and the name of the town. For those in an unincorporated area, which includes the vast majority of the county, your address is a County Road (CR) number and a number that identifies your home or business. In many cases it is not the same as your mailing address.

You can contact Grand County Dispatch at their non-emergency number 970-725-3311 to check your address in their database. Grand County EMS and GIS professionals have been hard at work ensuring that all of our roads are correctly marked and inputted into the county GIS systems.

A good first step is to write your address down and post it in several places in your home where it can be easily seen. Consider sticking it to the fridge, near a land line, or near the front door. Your address could also be included on an information page that you give to renters, babysitters, or visitors. The point is for you or anyone in your house to be able to quickly give your correct address to a 9-1-1 dispatcher.

Here's something you can try if you have a computer and like maps. Go to the Google Maps web site and enter your address. Does it take you to the correct location? Often there's a problem with Google's database and you can fix it in Google Maps by clicking on the "Report a Problem" link in the lower right hand corner. You'll be given the opportunity to correct the error and Google will send you an email when the problem is fixed.

When I entered my address, they showed a home a mile away from mine and listed a different town and ZIP code than the one I entered. I reported it and the problem was corrected within a few days. (It also solved the issues I was having with UPS and FedEx deliveries.) If you have any difficulty with this process contact me at the email address below.

Finally, you want your address to be clearly visible to emergency responders, especially in the dark. Large reflective numbers that can be seen from the street are recommended for those in a city. County residents can order a standard address sign like the one shown in the photo complete with mounting hardware for only \$20. Go to bewildfireready.org or call 970-887-3380 to order yours today.

Grand County first responders are dedicated, well trained, and eager to help you should the need arise. Help them to help you and your loved ones by knowing your address in the correct format and posting it inside and out. Send your questions or comments to bewildfireready@gmail.com.