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# COMPANIES GIRD FOR 911 RESPONSE FAILURES

## Y2K contingency planning includes options for calling fire, police help in emergency

BY PATRICK THIBODEAU

HERE'S NO guarantee that 911 emergency systems will work in year 2000 — and that has prompted some companies to investigate the Y2K readiness of local police, fire and medical rescue squads.

Elmer Gau, the year 2000 program manager at Dunlop Tire Corp. in Buffalo, N.Y., has done just that. And even though he's been told that local agencies will complete their year 2000 work in the fourth quarter, Gau said his company will also be ready with contingency plans.

Establishing direct radio links with emergency services and designating teams at company headquarters and its plants to "physically go and get police and fire" are being considered, he said.

Not all companies plan to take the same steps. A Sears, Roebuck and Co. official said contacting local emergency services about their year 2000 readiness isn't feasible. "If we were an organization that had one major location, it might be different. But we're not — we have over 3,000 locations," said spokeswoman Jan Drummond. Federal officials said they have little information about the year 2000 status of emergency services.



### The 411 on 911 Compliance:

- There are 300,000 emergency 911 calls made daily in the U.S.
- Emergency response involves more than dialing 911. Computer-aided systems help in dispatching and routing calls.
- According to the U.S. General Accounting Office, the year 2000 compliance of the systems that handle emergency calls is largely unknown.

## Few Sales Forecasts Factor In Panic Buying

### Y2K tosses wrench into gauging demand

BY STACY COLLETT

panies, depending on the type of product in demand and the region where it's sold. The best bet many industry groups can offer is after guidelines. The most common advice simply

companies are bothering to factor Y2K's effects into their forecasting," said Lon Marocco, vice president of partner group Inc. in Stamford, Conn. For grocery manufacturers,

turers are beginning to survey their customers. Items likely to be stockpiled include bottled water, baby food, canned goods and dairy products, according to the GMA.

Xeter bottler Danone International Brands Inc. in Stamford, Conn., will begin its year 2000 forecasting in September,

to gauge their supply needs, then ramp up its bottling accordingly, he said. The banking industry is experiencing its own angst over potential cash hoarding. "We all go through an anxiety bell curve. We're hoping by December that customers go through that and come back down," said