

## The Case of . . . The 911 Toilet Paper Emergency!

### The Scene

One unexpected consequence of the COVID-19 global health crisis was a nationwide shortage of toilet paper. As people prepared for a possibly lengthy quarantine, stocking up on bathroom tissue proved impossible in many locations.

Police in Newport, Oregon, used social media to plead with the public to stop calling 911 to report being out of toilet paper. A Facebook post by the Newport Police Department urged residents to stay calm and not panic if they run out of toilet paper.

The initial Facebook post was seen and shared by numerous news outlets including CNN, Fox News, and NPR.



### Possible Clues (Questions to Think About)

- **Triggers:** How does this information make you feel about the people involved—the police and those calling 911?
- **Access:** Does the presence of comments and/or like and share counts affect your ability to determine fact from fiction?
- **Forensics:** When was this story posted? Does the timing in any way influence its credibility?
- **Motives:** If this story turns out to be false or misleading, what kind of person would create/spread it?

**Were people REALLY calling 911 for TP, or does this story not smell right?**