



# Public Safety News

Montgomery County Department of Public Safety

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**Department of  
Public Safety**  
610-631-6500

Thomas Sullivan  
Director

John Corcoran  
Deputy Director,  
Public Affairs

Public Safety  
Training Campus  
610-278-3500

EMS Training  
Institute  
610-278-2666

Website:  
[www.dps.montcopa.org](http://www.dps.montcopa.org)

CAD Helpline:  
610-631-3001



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## First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet)

There has been a swirl of publicity and discussion regarding the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet), which was created by Congress in 2012, with the intention of creating the first nationwide interoperable public safety broadband network.

This broadband network would consist of multiple Radio Access Networks (RAN), which each state is required to create and connect to the FirstNet nationwide network core.

In March 2017, AT&T was awarded the contract to create the FirstNet core network and states were given an option to either opt-in or opt-out. Those that opted in are allowing FirstNet to create their RAN for them as part of the system. Those that opted-out will create their own RAN that must be compatible with the FirstNet core network. In December 2017, Pennsylvania opted in.

This network will operate on the Band 14 in the 700 MHz band of the radio spectrum, but it does not exist now and the earliest estimate for it to become reality is 2021. In the meantime, FirstNet will operate on AT&T's commercial network with FirstNet subscribers getting priority and preemption. Other broadband providers currently provide that same level of service, with public safety agencies getting priority and preemption.

There is no requirement that counties or public safety agencies use FirstNet.

The Department of Public Safety has met with numerous vendors to discuss the program and is taking a wait-and-see approach. We will monitor how FirstNet is rolled out before making any decisions about changing the way we operate.

As it stands now, FirstNet compatible devices are just being introduced to the market and have very high prices. The department's current broadband provider is also considerably less expensive than what it would cost to switch to FirstNet at this time.

We will continue to monitor the FirstNet program as it unfolds while we research what is the best option for the first responders in Montgomery County.

## Training On Recent Trends In IEDs & VB-IEDs

Philadelphia Police Bomb Squad Commander Thomas Fitzpatrick provide a four-hour training program on IEDs, Vehicle Borne IEDs and related bomb threats for police and fire officials at the Montgomery County Public Safety Training Campus.

The training will start at 9 a.m. on Friday, June 8<sup>th</sup>. It will be the same to a program Fitzpatrick recently presented at the FBI National Academy Associates spring "Welcome Back Training Luncheon" on March 30<sup>th</sup>.

Police and fire officials interested in attending should contact Karen Zero at [kzero@montcopa.org](mailto:kzero@montcopa.org) to register.

## Montgomery County Police Officer's Memorial Ceremony

The Montgomery County Police Officer's Memorial Committee, consisting of Montgomery County Fraternal Order of Police Lodges 14 (Montgomery County), 28 (Lower Merion), 31 (Norristown) and 37 (Pennsylvania State Police Pioneer Lodge) announce the annual Montgomery County Police Officer's Memorial Ceremony.

The ceremony will be held on Friday, May 4th, 2018 at 12:00 p.m. at the Police Officer's Memorial site which is located on Main Street in front of the Montgomery County Court House. (Main and Swede Streets, Norristown)

All Law Enforcement officers attending are requested to attend in full dress uniform including mourning bands over their badges. Honor and Color guards are requested to stage at 11:00 a.m. Rank and file will stage at 11:30 a.m. in front of the monument.

Seating will be available for families, guests and civilians in front of the monument.

The Ceremony will be held rain or shine. Marked police vehicles are to stage on Main Street between Swede St. and DeKalb Street.

Civilian parking will be available at the Wells Fargo Bank parking lot, 43 E. Main St. (Next to the court house). All vehicles should enter from the DeKalb Street end of Main Street.

A luncheon will follow immediately after the conclusion of the ceremony at the Holy Savior Club, 436 E. Main St., Norristown. Any questions, contact Officer DeGrosso, Norristown Police Department, at (484) 326-4208

## Patriotic Employer Award From National Guard

Michael Vest, Deputy Director for Emergency Communications at the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety was honored with a Patriotic Employer Award earlier this month by the Pennsylvania Employer Support of the National Guard and Reserve (ESGR), a Department of Defense program, for his outstanding support of an employee serving in the Guard and Reserve.

Vest was nominated for the award by Molly Keller, a telecommunicator for the department, who also serves as an intelligence analyst for with the 56<sup>th</sup> Stryker Brigade Combat Team of the Pennsylvania National Guard, for being particularly supportive in accommodating her Guard duty and work schedules.



"The law protects those who serve in the National Guard," said Maj. Gen. Wesley E. Craig, Jr., (Ret.), who chairs the Pennsylvania ESGR and presented the award. "But it's one thing to adhere to the law and it's another to work with the service member to truly accommodate their schedule and services."

"This recognition is for really going above and beyond what's required," he said.

(L-R): Deputy Director Mike Vest receives the Patriotic Employer Award from Maj. Gen. Wesley E. Craig, Jr., (Ret.) with the person who nominated him, Telecommunicator & Spc. Molly Keller.

The Stryker Brigades are a key component of the U.S. Army's force readiness and those units have a heavier training schedule than many other National Guard units, Craig said.



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Vest has some perspective on the challenges that can come with military service. Before coming to the Department of Public Safety, he retired from the U.S. Army in 2009 as a Chief Warrant Officer 3 after 20 years of service, seven years as an intelligence linguist and 13 years as an instructor/pilot.

ESGR, a DoD office, seeks to foster a culture in which all employers support and value the employment and military service of members of the National Guard and Reserve.

## Telecommunicator Awards/Telecommunicator Week



(L-R) DPS Director Tom Sullivan, Commissioner Ken Lawrence, Jr., Assistant Director Emergency Communications Jen Cass, Telecommunicator Robert Grose, Telecommunicator Patrick Francis and Deputy Director Mike Vest

The Department of Public Safety was pleased to welcome Montgomery County Commissioner Ken Lawrence, Jr., and Montgomery County Chief Detective Sam Gallen, to help us present this year's Telecommunicator of the Year and Telecommunicator Trainee of the Year awards.

The Telecommunicator of the Year award for 2018 was presented to Robert Grose. In the nominations for the award, one of Bob's co-

workers wrote that he "embodies everything we do here and shows actual genuine care for not only the public but for (his) co-workers and the work we do here. I couldn't possibly think of anyone else more deserving."



(L-R) Chief Detective Sam Gallen, Telecommunicator Robert Grose, Assistant Director Emergency Communications Jen Cass, Telecommunicator Patrick Francis and Deputy Director Mike Vest

Telecommunicator Trainee of the Year award was presented to Patrick Francis. Patrick's co-workers described him as very knowledgeable for someone who has been in the job for a short period of time and who "always comes to work with a good attitude" and "offers to help any chance he can."

Each year, the second week of April is designated as National Public Safety Telecommunicator Week, to recognize the professionals, also known as dispatchers and 911 operators, who serve as the heroes behind the scenes.

The Department of Public Safety would like to thank all of the organizations and individuals who sent appreciations for our telecommunicators: Mission BBQ; Plymouth Township Police Chief Joseph Lawrence; Upper Moreland Police Association; Upper Merion Fire Rescue Services Board; Chick-Fil-A; Red Hill Fire Company; FOP Lodge 14; American Heritage; Kova; Cindy Gordon-Created for You; Iron Hill Brewery; Horsham Fire Company; Willow grove Fire Company; Limerick Fire Company; Municipal Fire Officers Association; The Blue Knights PA 22; Police & Fire Federal Credit Union; Montgomery County Commissioner Joe Gale; Montgomery Township Fire Department; P.J. Whelihan's, Oaks; Franconia Police Department; Abington Police Department; Limerick Police Department; Montgomery Township Police Department; Upper Providence Police Department; Narberth Ambulance; James Mastrocola; Michael Prendergast; Sue Grady; Lou Chiccarine; Marc Leong; all Platoon Supervisors; Mike Vest & Jenn Cass.



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## Upper Providence Celebrates Sudden Cardiac Arrest Saves

Upper Providence had a lot to celebrate at the township supervisors' meeting in mid-April. There were two survivors of sudden cardiac arrests from separate incidents in the township last month who were on hand to thank the bystanders and first responders who worked as teams to save their lives.

The first incident occurred on March 5th during softball practice at Pope John Paul II High School in Royersford. When a 15-year-old student went into cardiac arrest, the coach and trainers called 9-1-1, performed CPR and applied an automatic external defibrillator (AED) until Royersford Fire & EMS crews arrived.

The Upper Providence Supervisors presented commendations to Pope John Paul II softball Coach Amanda Knight, Trainers Tracey Rarich and Christian Loedel. Royersford Paramedics Mathew Wagner and Roger Duckwall and EMTs Derek Dry, Aaron Sifford, Regina Solecki, Mathew Swanson and Briana Godin for their lifesaving actions that day.



(L-R) SCA survivor Joe Goul, co-worker Mark Zahour, who performed CPR on Goul, and Telecommunicator Donna Benz.

The second incident occurred on the afternoon of March 14th. When Joe Goul went into cardiac arrest, co-worker Mark Zahour called 9-1-1. Department of Public Safety Telecommunicator Donna Benz coached Zahour through CPR until responders from Upper Providence Police, Upper Providence Fire and Emergency Services, Lower Providence EMS, Trappe Fire Co. Ambulance and Black Rock Volunteer Fire Company arrived.

In addition to Zahour and Benz, the Upper Providence Supervisors presented commendations to Patrol Sergeant Ryan Sheehan, Paramedics Caroline Lawson, Heather Staley and Wayne Salat, EMT Brandon Gramm and Firefighter/EMTs Jason Adams, Branden Sisca, Rich Ressel and Ryan Colelli and Firefighters John McGrory, Rob Rorick and Mathew Wannamaker, Junior Firefighter Alex Cruciani and Officers Jacob Allen and Michael Sheehan.

The survival rate for Sudden Cardiac Arrest nationally is around 10 percent, so to have two survivors with weeks of each other is a rare feat. Congratulations to everyone who was involved!

## Daytime Summer Essentials Program

There is still space available in this year's Summer Essential course, a daytime training program that gives college students and shift-workers an opportunity to prepare for Firefighter I certification in just six weeks.

The training runs daily from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., usually three or four days a week, from May 15<sup>th</sup> through June 27<sup>th</sup> at the Montgomery County Fire Academy, 1175 Conshohocken Rd., Conshohocken, PA 19428.

The Pennsylvania Entry Level Firefighter curriculum consists of four courses: Introduction to the Fire Service, Fire Ground Support, Exterior & Interior Firefighter.

Lunch will not be provided as part of this course. All students must be 18 the first day of class. Additional information can be found in the attached April 2018 Notices.



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## Crisis Response Canine Training

Sharon Schermerhorn and Lena, her K9 therapy dog partner, spent some time with us at the Montgomery County Public Safety Training Campus in mid-April so that Lena could become familiar with the sound of gunfire before participating in an active shooter drill.



The pair are volunteers with NATIONAL Crisis Response Canines, a non-profit organization dedicated to harnessing “the power of the human-canine bond to inspire resilience and recovery in people affected by crisis, trauma or disaster, and the responders who help them.”

Schermerhorn and Lena are participating in an active shooter drill at an airport in Florida that calls for them to be within about 100 yards of sims rounds being fired. Lena had never been near any kind of live

fire and Schermerhorn contacted Janine Paul, the Department of Public Safety Police Training Coordinator, about getting Lena acclimated to the sound of gunfire.

It’s a little outside the normal activities at the training campus, but Paul said she was happy to help the pair get ready for their upcoming drill.

## Career Opportunities

The Department of Public Safety is seeking candidates for the position of Assistant Director for Homeland Security and Intelligence.

The Assistant Director for Homeland Security and Intelligence acts as the program manager for the county-wide records management system; as well as overseeing its development, operations and continuity. This person will serve as liaison and establish a cooperative relationship with the appropriate state and local agencies and departments and various private corporations to protect the county’s infrastructure and the safety of its residents.

This person is also responsible for developing intelligence analysis programs to analyze information lawfully collected by federal, state and local law enforcement agencies and by elements of the intelligence community with respect to threats of terrorist acts against the County of Montgomery.

The person in this position will encourage the use of Department of Homeland Security funding for programs and initiatives that directly support local efforts to enable interdiction and disruption of terrorist activity through enhanced understanding and recognition of pre-operational activity and other crimes that may be precursors or indicators of terrorist activity.

For a complete job description and to download an application, please visit us on the web: <https://www.montcopa.org/jobs.aspx>

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A consortium of 16 local police departments will give a unified entry-level written test for the position of police officer on Saturday, May 12th. The deadline for submitting an application is Wednesday, May 2nd at 5 p.m.



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Upper Merion Township is looking to fill six full-time Firefighter/EMT positions. The Firefighter/EMTs will respond to fires, rescues and other disaster situations, provide emergency medical treatment, conduct property inspections, maintain related equipment, buildings and grounds, conduct community outreach and other duties as assigned. The deadline for submitting an application is Friday, May 25<sup>th</sup> at 4 p.m.

More detailed information can be found in the attached April 2018 Notices.

## **Hazard Vulnerability Assessment & Mitigation Plan Adopted**

Upper Providence became the first municipality to adopt the 2017 Montgomery County Hazards Vulnerability Assessment and Mitigation Plan when the Township Supervisors voted to do so at their meeting in April.

That means that Upper Providence and any other municipality in the county that follows its lead will be eligible to apply for federal Hazard Mitigation grants over the next five years.

After a federally declared disaster, municipalities can apply for grants to elevate flood prone homes and buildings in the affected areas or purchase them and convert them to open space.

To obtain the grants, municipalities have to go through a long, burdensome process. Upper Providence did so recently under the county's previous Mitigation Plan and obtained a \$146,389 grant in October 2016 to purchase a property damaged Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee, two storms that hit barely a week apart in 2011.

## **Busy Month For Planning and Preparedness**

The Emergency Management Division teamed up with other divisions and departments within county government, as well as partner emergency response and non-governmental agencies to conduct an extensive series of trainings throughout April.

### **Mass Care & Shelter Workshop**



Emergency Management hosted a Mass Care & Shelter Workshop on April 4<sup>th</sup> as part of the review of its Mass Care Annex. Various county departments and volunteer agencies with roles in providing health and human services in the community participated. This collaboration helped

identify additional resources and strengthen the network necessary for offering mass care support to our municipalities in all phases of disaster.

### **SEPTA/Amtrak Safety Training**

At its April monthly meeting, the Department of Public Safety's Emergency Management Division hosted Amtrak and SEPTA Railroad Safety. Brian McDonough, Regional Emergency Management for Amtrak, and John Townsend, Safety Officer/Fire Marshall for SEPTA, provided a high level, informative session for our stakeholders. This training provided an overview of the logistics and operations of both Amtrak and Septa. They also discussed reporting standards when it comes to train incidents.



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The Emergency Management Division's monthly meetings are hosted every 3rd Wednesday of the month. The next meeting is May 16th and will be held at the Emergency Operations Center in Eagleville. While the monthly meetings are normally open to all stakeholders, this session is Alastar training is ONLY open to Emergency Management Coordinators, Deputy Coordinators and their EOC Staff.

Those interested in attending should contact Heather Morgan, Training and Exercise Coordinator, at [hmorgan@montcopa.org](mailto:hmorgan@montcopa.org).

### Mass Casualty Incidents Review

The Emergency Medical Services division held a Mass Casualty Incidents, Triage and Specialty Resources review on April 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Limerick Fire Company station.



Over 60 representatives from four western Montgomery County fire and EMS agencies attended. The program included a discussion about response and the role that firefighters and heavy rescue companies have in assisting EMS at major incidents. There was also information on the five levels of County MCI response, the role of trauma centers and how EMS helicopter agencies with multiple landing zones could come into play.

### Managing Food Emergencies Training

The Department of Public Safety and the Office of Public Health co-hosted the two-day course "Managing Food Emergencies: Strategies for a Community Response" on April 25<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> at the Montgomery County Emergency Operations Center.



This course encourages multidisciplinary and multiagency planning to quickly mobilize resources in a food emergency using a whole community approach that combines the National Incident Management System (NIMS), the Incident Command System (ICS), and the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to respond to food emergencies.

Participants learned how to identify what should trigger a food emergency response, identify responder roles, resources and successfully communicate with other agencies and the public about what to do during a food emergency and the recovery phase.

The course combined a facilitated discussion and scenario-based training to give participants tangible experience applicable to a real-world food emergency. Training was provided by the National Center for Biomedical Research and Training.



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