School Security/Active Threat Training Stepped Up

It may have been the first day of summer vacation for students in the Pottsgrove School District, but June 11th was an opportunity for the administrators, staff and teachers at the Pottsgrove School District, along with police officers from the Lower, West and Upper Pottsgrove police departments to conduct an active shooter exercise.

The exercise at Pottsgrove High School was just the latest in a series of trainings that the Department of Public Safety’s school safety unit has been conducting throughout Montgomery County.

The unfortunate reality is that Montgomery County has a full-time team of safety specialists working directly with the schools to improve their security and a committee of emergency responders from throughout the county preparing for active threat responses that could occur in schools and other venues.

Large scale exercises like the one held at Pottsgrove High School are the culmination of a series of trainings and tabletop exercises leading up to it. The Department of Public Safety’s School Safety Unit will continue working with schools throughout Montgomery County over the summer on safety planning, building assessments, training and drills.

For more information, contact School Safety Coordinator Steve Beck at 610-278-3500, ext. 6629 - sbeck@montcopa.org, or School Safety Specialist Dean Miller at 610-278-3500, ext. 6632 - DMiller4@montcopa.org

Save The Date – 2019 EDITS Symposium

The 2019 Emergency Disaster Incident Training Symposium (EDITS) will be held on May 7th and 8th, 2019 at Normandy Farms in Blue Bell. A program and registration information will be available this Fall.

“An Evening For Volunteers” will return and will be held on May 6th, also at Normandy Farms, at no cost to Montgomery County volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel.

EDITS is co-sponsored by the Eastern Montgomery County Emergency Management Group and the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety. The evening presentation is sponsored by and made possible through the generosity of The Montgomery County Consortium of Municipalities.
Opioid Awareness Night

The Montgomery County Opioid Task Force held a free “Opioid Awareness Community Night” in June to provide residents information on the illnesses and deaths being caused by the opioid crisis and describe the local resources that are available to combat it.

A variety of public safety, social service, public health and law enforcement officials provided information on how to administer overdose-reversing Naloxone and where to get it, how to give cardio pulmonary resuscitation (CPR), resources for navigating insurance providers and where to get treatment.

Additional information can be found on the Opioid Task Force’s web page: https://www.montcopa.org/2289/Overdose-Prevention

The Pottstown Health & Wellness Foundation has also posted a four-part web video series “Opioids: Communities Finding Solutions” to its YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCl-L0d1UpLGICFQISYRI_rA

Commendations For Child Birth Assist

Montgomery County Telecommunicators Jack Zabinski and Stephanie Barber and Lower Gwynedd Police Sgt. Michael Rogge received commendations at a Lower Gwynedd Supervisors meeting this week for helping a township woman give birth in her home earlier in the month.

Zabinski, who had only been on the job four months and still in training, took a call shortly after 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 7th, from Cathrine Strulson who was frantic because her cousin was in active labor.

Rogge arrived shortly after the baby was born and took over, getting the baby to start breathing and making sure her airway was cleared of fluids and she was kept warm until the ambulance arrived.

Loticia and James Kwon brought little Jamie, less than three weeks old, and big sister Taelle, to the Lower Gwynedd Supervisors meeting Tuesday night to thank Zabinski and Rogge for the assist. Unfortunately, Barber and Strulson were unable to attend.
PulsePoint AED Scholarship Contest Highly Successful

The last day of CPR/AED Awareness Week was a great time to update the Montgomery County Commissioners on the results of the Easiest Scholarship Ever! and to thank Darren Sudman, CEO and co-founder of Simon’s Heart, and Samantha Krouse, manager of Got AED, for sponsoring a wildly successful campaign.

The Easiest Scholarship Ever! awarded a monthly prize of $250 to the person who registered the most AEDs using the PulsePoint AED smartphone app. Simon’s fund and Got AED gave out $1,500 in prizes and in just seven months, the number of publicly available AEDs registered in Montgomery County tripled, from 177 AEDs before the contest started on Nov. 1st to 530 AEDs when it ended May 31st.

The Easiest Scholarship Ever! is responsible for almost all of the new AEDs registered. Contestants were directly responsible for registering 271 AEDs (75%) and promotions for the contest likely resulted in many of the remaining AEDs registered by non-participants.

There are approximately 500 out-of-hospital Sudden Cardiac Arrests each year in Montgomery County. Unfortunately, only 10 percent of those people survive and recover. A person’s chances of surviving nearly triple, however, when bystanders start CPR before emergency medical responders arrive and an AED is used.

In an effort to improve those numbers, Montgomery County began using the PulsePoint apps in May, 2017. PulsePoint Respond is integrated with Montgomery County’s Computer Aided Dispatch System and the GPS on the user’s phone. If a sudden cardiac arrest is dispatched to within a quarter-mile of someone who has PulsePoint Respond activated on their phone, an alert will sound and it will open up to a map showing the users location, the dispatch location and the locations of any AEDs in the vicinity that have been registered using the PulsePoint AED app.

The Department of Public Safety encourages everyone, emergency responders in particular, in Montgomery County to download the use the PulsePoint apps. They are available at the iTunes Store and Google Play or by following this link: http://www.pulsepoint.org/download/

Fire Academy Fall 2018 Training Schedule

The Montgomery County Fire Academy has posted the Fall 2018 Training Schedule on the Department of Public Safety’s web site.

Both the training schedule and a course catalogue can be accessed from the Fire Academy’s web page: http://montcopa.org/136/Fire-Academy

A copy of the Fall training schedule can also be found in the attached June 2018 Notices.
Fire Task Force Receives Blitz Monitors

The Department of Public Safety recently distributed five Bliztfire Portable Monitors to fire companies in the county’s Fire Task Force, each of which comes equipped with combination fog nozzles, strait bore tips and foam attachments. They have a maximum flow of 500 GPM and an oscillating feature for unmanned use.

The Towamencin and Limerick fire companies, from the West Fire Task Force Group, and Edge Hill Fire Company from the Eastern Fire Task Force Group, each received one of the monitors. Centre Square Fire Company, also of the Eastern Fire Task Force Group, received two monitors for deployment alongside Deluge 20 as a single asset.

The monitors were purchased using federal Homeland Security funds through the Southeast Pennsylvania Task Force.

Hot Weather/Excessive Heat Rehab Resources

All response agencies are reminded that cooling resources are available for deployment during extended operations when hot weather/excessive heat is putting responders at risk.

A resource list of EMS agencies that have cooling vests, misting fans and ice, ice coolers, cooling chairs and shade tents is included in the attached May 2018 Notices. In addition, the 313 Rehab Bus is available to respond to major incidents.

Once an agency’s own resources are in use and it is anticipated that additional resources will be needed, a request for additional rehab assets should be made by Incident Command through the Emergency Communications Division.

Limerick & Linfield Fire Companies Merging

The Limerick and Linfield fire companies are working toward merging the two entities into a single organization that will be known as the Limerick Fire Department by the end of the year.

The two organizations have begun training together on a regular basis and have been responding to all emergencies in Limerick Township together since October, 2017.

For more information, see the joint press release in the attached June 2018 Notices.
Limerick Fire Co. Reports “Spoofing” Complaints

The Limerick Fire Company has received reports from numerous people who received automated telephone call from a number that came up on Caller ID as the firehouse’s main business line.

An investigation confirmed that the calls did not originate from the firehouse. The Limerick and Linfield fire companies do not use automated dialers to solicit donations. Anyone who receives such a call is urged to file a complaint with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC): https://consumercomplaints.fcc.gov/hc/en-us/requests/new?ticket_form_id=39744

Emergency Management Certifications Achieved


Congratulations to Schwenksville Emergency Management Coordinator Christopher Melville, (left) Robert Chiarlanza, (center) and Lee T. Allen, deputy emergency management coordinators for Springfield Township, on receiving PEMA Local Basic Emergency Management certification.