



Public Safety News

Montgomery County Department of Public Safety

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**Montgomery County
Commissioners**

Valerie Arkoosh, Chair
Kenneth Lawrence, Jr.
Joseph Gale

Radio System Update

Motorola representatives have met with the Montgomery County Commissioners and attended meetings of the associations representing first responders to explain why the microwave network that communicates between towers in the new emergency dispatch radio system isn't working as it was designed to and what they are doing about it.

There are several factors involved and Motorola hasn't finished evaluating all 30 radio tower sites. Its representatives promised to provide the commissioners with a written report in two weeks detailing its findings and how it plans to address the problems.

Motorola's goal is to have all the problems fixed and the system online by June 2019, but that target date could change depending on the solutions needed to correct the problems. The company has been finding problems with the installation of equipment at some sites and is fixing those as soon as they are discovered. But some solutions will likely require larger dish antennas, for example, or moving antennas higher on towers. To do that, work may need to be performed to bolster the tower's ability to bear more weight, leases may need to be renegotiated with the owners of private towers or permitting and zoning approvals may be necessary. All of those carry the possibility of further delays.

The microwave network enables communications between the 30 radio towers on the system and is needed to replace the T1 fiber optic lines used in the current system that have proven to be unreliable. None of the problems found are related to the radio equipment that enables communications between the towers and the portable or mobile radios being used by responders in the field.

Motorola has committed to paying for any additional costs the delay causes the county.

The company has also agreed to a two-year extension, through November 2021, to the warranties on all 4,600 of the radios that agencies bought as part of the bulk purchasing agreement in 2015.

Cross-County Radio Programming

The Department of Public Safety will begin programming Bucks County radio channels into the radios of Montgomery County fire companies along the border that regularly respond into Bucks on mutual aid calls.

Montgomery County Emergency Communications has provided their counterparts in Bucks County with an inventory of radios for the Montgomery County fire companies that respond into their jurisdiction. Bucks County needs to assign IDs for those radios in their radio system and send them back.

When Montgomery County receives those radio IDs, technicians will build the templates needed and then begin programming the radios with Bucks County's channels.

The fire companies along the border with Bucks County will be programmed first and the companies along the borders with Chester and Berks counties will be next.

Motorola Offering Radio Discount

Motorola Solutions Inc. (MSI) is offering Montgomery County emergency response agencies a discount promotion for new radios that are purchased before the end of calendar year 2018.

The company is offering the same 32 percent discount from current list price as per the Montgomery County contract, plus trade-in credits for old XTS radios.

Motorola will give a \$700 trade-in credit for any old XTS radio toward the purchase of a new APX6000 or APX6500 or a \$400 credit toward the purchase of a new APX4000 or APX4500 for orders placed by Oct. 21, 2018.

After that date, the trade-in credit drops to \$350 for new APX6000 or APX6500 or a \$250 credit toward the purchase of a new APX4000 or APX4500 for orders placed by Dec. 21, 2018.

Motorola needs to receive the purchase orders by the dates listed above to honor the trade-in credits. You will not be invoiced by Motorola Solutions until your radios are programmed. The company is also offering financing options for 3, 4 & 5 years.

It should be noted that, unlike the bulk purchase, radios purchased will not be shipped to the county for programming. The transaction is between MSI and the agency that orders the radios. When the radios are delivered to the agency that ordered them, MSI will provide the county with the information needed to register the radios in the county data base and radio management system. Once that is done, MSI representatives will be able to program the agency's radios.

For additional information or to place an order, contact Rob Morella at Motorola Solutions: (267) 318-2132 or Robert.Morella@motorolasolutions.com

New Fire Dispatch Procedures Start October 1st

New fire voice dispatch procedures will be implemented October 1st at the request of the Joint Fire/EMS Radio Committee. Fire voice dispatches will be announced twice.

The first announcement will give the station number and/or units assigned, the type of incident, the location and the box number.

The second announcement will give the station number and/or units assigned, the type of incident, the location, cross streets, box number and municipality name.

Department of Public Safety Personnel Change

John Corcoran will move to the Montgomery County Commissioners Office on Oct. 8th to take the position of Director of Communications.

John has been with the Department of Public Safety for the past six years, serving as the Deputy Director for Public Affairs. He previously served as the county's Director of Communications from 2002 to 2011.

As Communications Director, John will manage communications for the Commissioners and coordinate communication efforts with departments county-wide.



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Joint Workshop For Municipal Officials

A joint workshop for municipal managers, elected officials and fire chiefs to present the findings of the recently completed countywide fire study will be held at the Montgomery County Fire Academy on Oct. 24th at 2 p.m. and again at 7 p.m.

The strategic planning study is intended to help fire companies and municipalities prepare for the delivery of fire services in Montgomery County over the next 20 years.

The study included direct input from both volunteer and career fire companies and was conducted on the premise that volunteers will be a viable force in the fire services for the foreseeable future.

It examines numerous issues the fire service is facing and makes recommendations for addressing current and future challenges. Among the issues addressed are recruiting and retaining volunteers, dispatch and response times, coverage, apparatus and equipment needs, radio communications and dispatch services, facilities and finances.

The Montgomery County Department of Public Safety commissioned the study, which was paid for using Homeland Security grant funding. It was conducted VFIS, a firm with local ties that has performed similar studies across the country and was selected using a Request For Proposals (RFP) process.

The study can be found by following this link: <https://bit.ly/2C4gmEe>. Please RSVP with the and number of people and which session you plan to attend to cmyers@montcopa.org

Montco US&R Team Recruiting Volunteers

The Montgomery County Department of Public Safety Emergency Management Division is accepting applications for Montgomery County Urban Search & Rescue Team (US&R).



Montgomery County US&R members are local responders highly trained in technical rescue. The team is available to assist municipalities/departments, as well as other counties, 24/7.

Montgomery County US&R can assist at incidents such as: structural collapse (breaching/breaking, shoring), technical search (visual, acoustic, & wide area), heavy lifting, trench rescue, confined space rescue, specialized rope rescue, and flood/swift water rescue.

The 2-part application process will consist of the membership application and a skills verification/interview. Anyone who is interested should fill out and return a completed application and resume no later than 9 a.m. on Oct. 29, 2018.

An information session to learn more about the team will be offered at the Montgomery County Public Safety Training Campus on Oct. 18, 2018 at 7 p.m. While not mandatory, interested applicants are encouraged to attend. Qualified applicants will be invited to attend a hands-on practical session to demonstrate their rescue skill sets the weekend of Nov. 10, 2018, at the Montgomery County Public Safety Training Campus.

The application package can be found in the attached September 2018 Notices or by following this link: <https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/22192/2018-USR-Application-Packet>



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Damage Assessment Training Requirement

The Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency has issued a directive that requires all Emergency Management Coordinators complete training by Nov. 2nd for PA Damage Reporter, a new damage assessment tool.

To provide relief for residents and meet the prerequisites of either the state or federal disaster declaration assistance process, a system of damage assessment and reporting has been devised and will be implemented with the guidance found in this Directive.

The Damage Reporter software tools provide for timely, standardized, and accurate damage and impact reporting to obtain state and federal assistance after a disaster.

The County will maintain the access to the report, but it is up to the Local Emergency Management Agencies to maintain working knowledge of the assessment process. To do this, PEMA has created 3 free training modules. Upon their completion the County will grant access to the system. To further help this implementation the County will also be providing a free hands-on training on November 14th for those that complete the training.

To get all the information in one place, including how to access the training, and how to get access to the system, Montgomery County has created an online Damage Assessment Dashboard. This dashboard can be found [here](#).

Emergency Management deputies and EOC staff are also encouraged to take the training, however only one log-in will be provided per municipality.

Anyone with questions or problems with the training or accessing the modules, please contact Heather Stem at hstem@montcopa.org or call 610-631-6517.

Montgomery County Hazardous Materials Study Available

The Montgomery County Hazardous Materials and Response Team (HMRT) has accepted a recently completed evaluation of its operations and strategic plan for making improvements to meet the needs of the communities it serves for the next five to 10 years.

Emergency Services Consulting International conducted the study and worked with Department of Public Safety staff and team members to evaluate the team's organizational composition, financial condition, management structure, staffing, training programs, service delivery, capital assets and infrastructure.

Current conditions were measured against relevant national accreditation criteria, NFPA Standards, federal and state mandates, recommendations from the Center for Public Safety Excellence, and best practices within the fire service.

The report includes recommendations for improving operations in the short term and projects the team's future needs in terms of training, personnel and equipment based on anticipated growth in population and industry.

A copy of the study is available on the HMRT's web page:
<https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/22193/Montgomery-County-HMRT-Evaluation-and-Strategic-Plan>



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Overdose Epidemic Report Available

The detailed analysis of the opioid epidemic in Montgomery County in 2017 is complete and available for review.

The Department of Public Safety produced the report at the direction of the Montgomery County Commissioners and in partnership with the District Attorney's Office, County Detectives and Coroner's Office.

The study provides a detailed analysis of the when and where drug-related incidents are occurring and who the victims are. Its purpose is to provide data for public safety, public health, substance abuse and mental health professionals to develop initiatives to combat the epidemic and reduce preventable deaths from drug-related overdoses.

The 75-page report can be found online by following this link:

<http://emstrainingcenter.org/phocadownload/EMS/Naloxone/Report/index.html>

Service Pins Awarded



Pictured above are Department of Public Safety Director Tom Sullivan with eight staff members who recently received services pins for their combined 145 years of service to the residents of Montgomery County. From left to right: Tom Sullivan, Donna Benz and Tori Rosa, both 25 years, Stephanie Barber, 10 years, Tim Detwiler, 15 years, Kathy Cabral, 25 years, Lewis Munoz, 10 years, Neal Welsh, 25 years, and Harry Reese, 10 years. Not pictured are Richard Lohwasser, Marvin Watkins and Karen Zero, all with 25 years, Herb Adams, 20 years, Matthew Markland and Steve Beck, each with 10 years.



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Emergency Management Certifications



Congratulations to Shaun Semmeles (pictured here with his family), a staff member of Limerick Township Emergency Management, on receiving PEMA Basic Local Certification.



Congratulations to Gregory Breyer, Emergency Management Coordinator for Limerick Township, on receiving PEMA Advanced Local Certification.



Congratulations to the following municipal and county staff for achieving PEMA certifications. Pictured left to right: Frank Colelli, Montgomery Township Emergency Management staff member (PEMA Professional Local Certification); Michael Campeggio, Emergency Management Coordinator for Pottstown Borough (PEMA Basic Local Certification); Michael McCann, Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator for Hatfield Township (PEMA Professional Local Certification); Harry Reese Jr., Montgomery County Telecommunicator (PEMA Advanced County Certification); and Michael Rubin, Montgomery County Radiological Planner (PEMA Advanced County Certification).



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