Department of Public Safety 2019 Annual Report

The Department of Public Safety’s 2019 Annual Report is now complete and is available for viewing online: 2019 Annual Report. In order to reduce printing costs and paper usage and increase availability to partner agencies and the public, the 2019 Annual Report will be released only in a digital format. It was created using the ESRI Story Map tool and is best viewed using Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox on your computer or by using your tablet or smartphone.

Inside the image-based report, you will learn about the many accomplishments of this department in 2019, including implementation of a closest unit policy for fire departments, reaccreditation of the EMS Training Institute, and a transition to WebEOC for incident management, resource tracking, and situational awareness.

In addition, you will learn about interesting department statistics, such as:

- Total Special Operations (HazMat and US&R) Training Sessions: 81
- Total Incidents Dispatched by the Communications Center: 859,026
- Students Trained at Fire Academy: 2,831
- EMS Division Ambulance Inspections: 165
- BearCat (armored vehicle) Responses: 28

If you have any questions or feedback concerning the Annual Report, please contact Public Affairs Coordinator Todd Stieritz at tstierit@montcopa.org.

New Asset Acquired to Improve Officer Safety

On Wednesday, February 12th, the Department of Public Safety took delivery of a brand new 2020 Lenco BearCat, which was purchased using funding from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Task Force and replaces our existing 2008 model.

The fully armored vehicle is housed at the Emergency Operations Center and, when called upon, is driven to incident scenes by trained officers from the Montgomery County Correctional Facility. The Department of Public Safety provides this resource for all Montgomery County police departments and tactical teams to protect officers in high-risk situations.

Left to right: Director Thomas M. Sullivan, Commissioner Kenneth E. Lawrence Jr., Law Enforcement Training Coordinator Janine Paul, Deputy Director Jesse Stemple
February: American Heart Month

During American Heart Month, it is important to discuss the serious problem that is Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA). Globally, SCA claims more lives than colorectal cancer, breast cancer, prostate cancer, influenza, pneumonia, auto accidents, HIV, firearms, and house fires combined. In the United States, one out of every 7.4 people will die of SCA (13.5%). In 2018, of the 575 reported cardiac arrests in Montgomery County, only 78 (13.6%) of the victims survived to hospital discharge.

In May 2017, in an effort to increase cardiac arrest survivability in Montgomery County, the Department of Public Safety launched the PulsePoint program, becoming only the second county in Pennsylvania to do so. This program consists of two separate but interconnected smartphone apps: PulsePoint Respond and PulsePoint AED.

PulsePoint Respond empowers everyday citizens to provide life-saving assistance to victims of sudden cardiac arrest. App users who have indicated they are trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and are willing to assist in case of an emergency can be notified if someone nearby is having a cardiac emergency and may require CPR. If the cardiac emergency is in a public place, the location-aware application will alert users within ¼ mile of the need for CPR simultaneous with the dispatch of advanced medical care. The application also directs these potential rescuers to the exact location of the closest Automated External Defibrillator (AED).

When a cardiac emergency strikes, finding an AED can help save a life, but that takes knowing where AEDs are located. PulsePoint AED lets you report and update AED locations so that emergency responders, including nearby citizens trained in CPR and off-duty professionals such as firefighters, police officers, and nurses, can find an AED close to them when a cardiac emergency occurs. Describe the location, snap a picture, and the information is stored for Department of Public Safety staff to verify. After that, the AED location data is made available to anyone using PulsePoint Respond.

If you live, work, visit, or go to school in Montgomery County, and you are CPR trained, you are encouraged to download and begin using the free PulsePoint apps. Both apps are available for iPhone and Android and can be downloaded from the iTunes Store and Google Play or by following this link: https://www.pulsepoint.org/download/.

The Montgomery County Department of Public Safety, as well as several other organizations, offers CPR and AED training for members of the community. For additional information, visit https://www.montcopa.org/378/Community-Medical-Training.
Busy Start to Year for Special Operations Training

Over the past five weeks, the three Montgomery County Special Operations teams have spent numerous hours improving their existing skills and learning new ones.

On Thursday, January 23rd, Dr. Ryan Overberger, Medical Team Manager for Pennsylvania Task Force 1 (PA-TF1), spoke to the Montgomery County Urban Search and Rescue (US&R) Team and Hazardous Materials Response Team (HMRT), as well as US&R teams from around the region. He discussed patient considerations and medical interventions for many different rescue scenarios, as well as personnel/crew safety considerations and indicators of overexertion such as dehydration and heat stress.

A few days later, on Wednesday, January 29th, members of the Incident Support Team (IST) spent their lunch breaks at the Emergency Operations Center learning about how they can best interface with emergency management staff during an incident. Discussion topics included resource ordering, personnel management, and communications.

The following week, on Thursday, February 5th, the US&R team spent an evening training on their two listening systems, which are capable of both acoustic and seismic monitoring. These assets are often used in collapse scenarios to search for viable victims and have the ability to “talk back” to a victim (situation dependent). The rescue specialists practiced skills on both open land and in buildings, which can often produce confusing results due to sound and vibrations resonating through the structure.

On Tuesday, February 11th, members of the HMRT attended decontamination refresher training at the Public Safety Training Campus. The technicians drilled in procedures that will be used if personnel come into contact with hazardous substances while operating at an incident. While chemical protective suits provide protection, they need to be cleaned following an operational assignment so that substances on them do not come into contact with the technician while doffing the suit.

The following weekend, members of the US&R team traveled to northern Pennsylvania to refresh their skills on ice rescue. The crew spent the majority of the day on the ice practicing boat-based rescue, direct contact rescue, and self-rescue. While it was a cold day for the group, this invaluable training keeps the members’ skills sharp and in a constant state of readiness. Montgomery County US&R currently has 21 individuals trained in all aspects of water rescue and remains an available resource for local municipalities.
On Thursday, February 20th, the US&R team was back on dry land reviewing considerations for both team and personal safety, and discussing abnormal safety concerns, such as radio frequency hazards, dust, and electrical hazards. Finally, on Tuesday, February 25th, the members of the HMRT attended refresher training on their highly specialized detection and identification equipment. Team members tested unknown materials and, based on the physical properties and initial size up, had to select the appropriate piece of equipment to correctly identify the product.

Montgomery County’s Special Operations responders are constantly training to ensure the highest level of service in providing technical support to the county’s emergency responders.

**Department of Public Safety Personnel Changes**

**Bob Grose** recently accepted the position of Quality Assurance Analyst, replacing Marisol Reinert, who transitioned to the role of Executive Assistant/Office Manager in October 2019. Bob has nearly 8 years of experience with the Department of Public Safety as a Telecommunicator and Communications Training Officer. In his new position, Bob will be responsible for ensuring that the standards in the department’s Quality Assurance (QA) and Improvement Program for telecommunicators are met and to serve as the primary point of contact with employees during QA review conferences.

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Emergency Operations Center

**Career Opportunities**

The Department of Public Safety is now seeking qualified applicants for the position of Emergency Preparedness Specialist (Chemical Safety Program). This position coordinates and implements the day to day operations of the Federal Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act of 1986 (SARA Title III, EPCRA) and the Pennsylvania Hazardous Material Emergency Planning and Response Act of 1990 (Act-165) for Montgomery County. Using these statutes, this position is responsible for ensuring compliance in both chemical quantity reporting and emergency planning. In addition, the position will ensure that usable plans are developed for and distributed to aid first responders for these facilities in question.

To view the full job description and to apply for this position, click [here](http://www.montcopa.org/jobs) or visit [www.montcopa.org/jobs](http://www.montcopa.org/jobs), scroll down to Public Safety, and then click on “Emergency Preparedness Specialist.”

This position is subject to 24-hour, 7 day call for all-hazard emergency incidents which could require response to an incident scene and/or the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The position may require the individual to function in austere work environments for extended periods of time.
On Friday, January 31st, the Department of Public Safety provided training for school administrators and nurses on proper lifting and moving techniques in the event they have a student who is unable to evacuate a school under their own power. Practical evolutions included the use of both specialized moving devices and everyday items such as blankets.

On Wednesday, February 5th, Department of Public Safety staff participated in a regional debris management table-top exercise to test plans designed to speed up recovery, return communities to normalcy, and facilitate federal assistance after a hurricane, tornado, flood, or other major debris-generating incident.

On Saturday, February 15th, the Department of Public Safety participated in live fire training with the Fort Washington Fire Company on the 3100 block of Walnut Ave in Upper Dublin Township. The Tactical Communications Team and Field Comm 3 provided dispatches and operational communications for the mock scenarios, to both sharpen skills and build relationships with local partners.
Emergency Management Certifications Awarded

Over the past month, two Department of Public Safety staff were presented with Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency certifications. Individuals involved in municipal or county emergency management in the Commonwealth can achieve certifications at three levels: basic, advanced, and professional. Each level requires the applicant to complete numerous training classes, as well as attend Department of Public Safety monthly meetings.

Individuals involved in emergency management in Montgomery County who are interested in obtaining their PEMA certifications can contact Training and Preparedness Coordinator Heather Stem at hstem@montcopa.org for additional information.

Dennis Orangers (above), Fire & EMS Communications Manager for the Emergency Communications Division, received a PEMA Certificate of Achievement for completing the Advanced Professional Series, while Jake Frye (left), Radiological Planner within the Division of Emergency Management, received the PEMA Basic Level Emergency Management Certification. Both are pictured with Director Thomas M. Sullivan.

Upcoming EMS Training Programs Announced

The Montgomery County Department of Public Safety – EMS Training Institute is offering several upcoming courses this spring and summer:

- **Paramedic Prep Course** (Mondays and Wednesdays 1900-2200, Saturdays 0800-1600, March 2nd–April 22nd)
- **Emergency Medical Responder** (Mondays and Wednesdays 1900-2200, Saturdays 0800-1600, March 16th–June 3rd)
- **Instructor Methodology Course** (Thurs 4/16, Sat 4/18, Sun 4/19, Tues 4/21, & Thurs 4/23, Tuesdays and Thursdays 1800-2200, Saturday and Sunday 0800-1700)
- **Paramedic** (Mondays and Wednesdays 1900-2200, Saturdays 0800-1600, May 18, 2020-December 16, 2021)
- **Emergency Medical Technician** (Monday-Thursday, 0800-1600, June 8th-August 6th)

All five courses will be held at the Public Safety Training Campus. For more information, see the February 2020 Notices. To register, visit [www.emstrainingcenter.org](http://www.emstrainingcenter.org).
Department of Public Safety Deploys to Assist with Brush Fire

On Monday, February 24th, the Department of Public Safety assisted the Upper Frederick Fire Company and numerous mutual aid agencies with a large brush fire on the 1600 block of Gravel Pike in Upper Frederick Township.

The department deployed a response team of several staff members, an Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) equipped with a thermal imaging camera to search for hot spots, and two all-terrain vehicles, one of which is equipped with a pump, tank, and booster reel and the other of which is designed for off-road personnel and equipment transport.

Any of these resources can be requested through the Emergency Communications Center via radio or phone.

Responders Train for Improved Active Threat Response Coordination

Over the next year, the Department of Public Safety will offer five sessions of Critical Decision Making for Complex Coordinated Attacks, a 16-hour course delivered by instructors from the Louisiana State University’s National Center for Biomedical Research and Training (NCBRT) – Academy of Counter-Terrorist Education (ACE). Each session will be hosted by a municipality or first responder agency in a different section of Montgomery County.

The course addresses the vulnerability of any community to a public safety situation, such as an active shooter at a shopping mall; a train derailment with hazardous chemicals; a bombing incident at a commercial district; a plane crash; or chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear, or explosive attack. These attacks, known as complex coordinated attacks, involve multiple threats that often exceed conventional response tactics and require a joint response involving members from varying disciplines and jurisdictions. The course is intended to enhance the capabilities of participants by providing them with the knowledge and tools to enable effective response.

While seats are limited, Montgomery County first responders interested in attending one of these offerings should contact Training and Preparedness Coordinator Heather Stem at hstem@montcopa.org for additional information.
Emergency Communications Staff Visit US Capitol

Earlier this month, three Department of Public Safety representatives attended the 9-1-1 Goes to Washington Conference, hosted by the National Emergency Number Association (NENA). Major topics of discussion included legislation that promotes the emergency communications telecommunicator job classification, funding for Next Generation (NG) 9-1-1 technology, and other various bills that may affect the provision of 9-1-1 services that are being introduced in the US Congress.

During the conference, the Department of Public Safety team had the pleasure of meeting Congresswoman Norma Torres, who represents California’s 35th District. A former 9-1-1 dispatcher herself, the Congresswoman was responsible for introducing the 9-1-1 SAVES Act in the US House of Representatives. The bill, cosponsored by Congressman Brian Fitzpatrick (PA-1), would change the federal classification of 9-1-1 dispatchers from “Office and Administrative Support” to “Protective Service Occupation” in recognition of the essential, but many times underappreciated, services they provide.

The group also visited the offices of Congresswoman Madeline Dean (PA-4) and Congressman Fitzpatrick, whose districts cover Montgomery County, to discuss two other bills that would provide funding and support for NG 9-1-1.

Upcoming Fire Academy Courses Announced

The Montgomery County Fire Academy is offering numerous courses this spring and summer. Highlights include:

- **Scenario Based Decision Making for the Company Officer** – Saturday, March 21st
- **First Responder Safety Training for Natural Gas Vehicles and Fueling Stations** – Friday, April 3rd or Saturday, April 4th (two offerings)
- **Responding to Ethanol Incidents** – Friday, June 5th or Saturday, June 6th (two offerings)

These three courses will be held at the Public Safety Training Campus. For more information, see the February 2020 Notices.

To view the complete training schedule for the spring and early summer, visit [https://www.montcopa.org/1006/Training-Schedule](https://www.montcopa.org/1006/Training-Schedule).