MCDPS Recognizes EMS Professionals on National EMS Week

May 16-22, 2021 was the 46th annual National EMS Week. In 1974, President Gerald Ford authorized EMS Week to celebrate Emergency Medical Services (EMS) practitioners and the important work they do in our nation's communities.

EMS Week honors the dedication of those who provide the day-to-day lifesaving services of medicine's "front line" and serve an essential role in protecting the health and wellbeing of our citizens and responders.

The Department of Public Safety would like to recognize our EMS providers and extend heartfelt gratitude for everything they do each day to save lives and foster a strong EMS system in Montgomery County. In particular, over the past 14 months, our EMS professionals have gone above and beyond the call of duty to keep our County’s residents and visitors safe and healthy throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pictured here are some of the lawn signs that we delivered to our EMS stations and hospitals during EMS Week. Thank for your service to our community!

Clockwise, starting at the top left: Goodwill Ambulance Sub-Station/Ringing Hill Fire Company (Medic 329-B), VMSC Lansdale Deputy Chief Lori Dusza (Medic 345), Upper Perkiomen Valley Ambulance (Medic 369), Goodwill Ambulance (Medic 329), and Upper Merion Township Fire & EMS Department (Medic 356).
Windows 10 Upgrade Required for MDCs by June 30th

The Department of Public Safety recently completed a Pennsylvania State Police CLEAN (Commonwealth Law Enforcement Assistance Network) Technical Audit. To maintain CLEAN and CJIS (Criminal Justice Information Services) Compliance, as of July 1, 2021, Windows 7 based Mobile Data Computers (MDCs) will no longer be permitted to connect to the Public Safety network for CAD or MPS (Mobile for Public Safety). All MDCs (police, fire, and EMS) must be upgraded to Windows 10 Pro prior to this date.

If you are still using Windows 7 after June 30, 2021, your computer will be blocked from the network. If your hardware is aging, now is the time to start planning for replacements. If your agency needs assistance with hardware specifications or upgrade assistance, please email DPSCADHelp@montcopa.org and Department of Public Safety – Technology Division staff will be happy to assist where possible.

LEPC Members Recognized for Service to Montgomery County

During the May 11th meeting of the County’s Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), several members were recognized for their years of service and dedication to chemical safety preparedness in Montgomery County.

**James Leary**, Law Enforcement Representative, submitted his resignation from the LEPC after retiring from the Souderton Borough Police Department in January. Most recently serving as Chief in Souderton, Jim worked in local law enforcement in Montgomery County for over 46 years. He previously spent three decades with the Abington Township Police Department, achieving the rank of Lieutenant, before a five-year term as Chief of the Rockledge Borough Police Department. Jim has been a member of the LEPC since 2016.

**Donald Sirianni, Jr.**, Public Works Representative, resigned from the LEPC in anticipation of his retirement from Springfield Township later this summer. Currently serving as the Director of Public Works, Don has worked for the Township for 49 years, starting part time in 1972 and coming aboard full time three years later. Don is the current Treasurer and past President of the Montgomery County Public Works Association and serves as Deputy Chief of the Oreland Volunteer Fire Company in Springfield Township. He has been a member of the LEPC since 2015.

**Greg Janiec**, Environmental Protection Representative, resigned from the LEPC as he is moving to Florida with the intent to retire from his career within the next few years. Greg currently works as a Senior Project Manager for Sovereign Consulting, where he oversees retail clients with environmental compliance and remediation issues. In his current role since 2013, Greg has nearly 30 years of environmental consulting experience. He has been a member of the LEPC since 2014.

**Jack Zabinski**, LEPC Coordinator, resigned from the LEPC in concurrence with his resignation as the Emergency Preparedness Specialist for the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety. Prior to his current role, Jack served as a 9-1-1 Telecommunicator from February 2018 until May 2020. He recently accepted a new position with Team Rubicon and will be relocating to Texas this summer.

Thank you to Jim, Don, Greg, and Jack for your service! Best of luck in your future endeavors!
Outage Reporting Reminder in Advance of Hurricane Season

On Thursday, May 20th, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) released their 2021 Atlantic Hurricane Season Outlook. NOAA is predicting another active season, giving a 60% chance of an above-normal season in terms of numbers of named storms, hurricanes, and major hurricanes (categories 3-5). However, experts do not anticipate the historic level of storm activity seen in 2020.

For more information, visit [https://www.noaa.gov/media-release/noaa-predicts-another-active-atlantic-hurricane-season](https://www.noaa.gov/media-release/noaa-predicts-another-active-atlantic-hurricane-season).

With this in mind, the Department of Public Safety’s Division of Emergency Management and Emergency Communications Division would like to remind municipal first responders of the proper electrical utility outage reporting process.

- On “blue sky” days, municipal responders may continue to report outages to the Emergency Communications Center (ECC) via 800 MHz radio.
- During storms or other high call volume situations, the Department of Public Safety urges municipal police and fire personnel to work with their Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) to streamline the power outage reporting process.
- If possible, outages should be communicated to Montgomery County through one source in each municipality to minimize duplicate entries, particularly when a “priority traffic” alert is issued by the ECC.
- When the Montgomery County Watch Desk or Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated, outages should be reported via the online Outage Report Form, which can be found in WebEOC under Montco Links. Please note that this form is not active on a day-to-day basis.
  - PECO Energy uses three levels of prioritization for electrical-related incidents. For more information, see the chart below. Personnel located in areas not served by PECO (e.g., PPL, Met-Ed, local electric company) should still utilize the WebEOC form but should disregard this prioritization framework.
    - PF1 (Emergency/Life Threatening) incidents should be submitted through the Outage Report Form and followed up with a phone call to the Watch Desk (610-631-6530).
    - PF2 (Priority/Standby) and PF3 (Routine/Other) should only be entered in the Outage Report Form.
  - Municipalities should refer to the RC Road Closure List to accurately assign RC-1, RC-2, or RC-3 to each outage report. Any EMC in need of a current road prioritization list for their township or borough should email EOCwatchdesk@montcopa.org.
- In addition, EMCs should actively maintain current lists of outages and road closures throughout an incident to assist with the deduplication process.
- When the Watch Desk is notified by the utility provider that the outage or utility-related road closure has been resolved, the Department of Public Safety will in turn notify the proper municipality or municipalities.
### PECO Incident Prioritization Matrix

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<th>PF1</th>
<th>PF2</th>
<th>PF3</th>
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<td><strong>Definition</strong></td>
<td>A serious electric related condition, situation, or incident for which time is a critical factor, requiring urgent response to minimize or avoid personal injury or significant property damage.</td>
<td>A potential dangerous electric related condition, situation, or incident with no immediate risk of personal injury, but is adversely affecting firefighting or other emergency operations.</td>
<td>An electric related condition, situation, or incident with no apparent risk of personal injury or property damage.</td>
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</tbody>
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| **Examples** | • Pole hit with electric wires down, preventing a rescue (person trapped in vehicle).  
• Structure fire preventing a rescue.  
• Person shocked or a person at imminent risk of being shocked by electric facilities. | • Wire arcing  
• Pole leaning  
• Wire sagging  
• Manhole cover missing  
• Structure fire, not preventing a rescue, where the fire department is unable to shut off the electric and/or gas, and fire suppression is being hampered.  
• Electric wires down not preventing a rescue.  
• PECO Energy electric distribution equipment on fire. |  |

### Emergency Management Certifications Awarded

Over the past few months, several of our municipal partners were presented with their 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.

While appointed municipal Emergency Management Coordinators are required by Commonwealth law to obtain basic and advanced certifications, all levels are voluntary for other staff members. Despite this, many of our municipalities have gone above and beyond the requirements, certifying their Coordinators at the professional level and other staff at basic, advanced, or professional.

Anyone involved in municipal emergency management in Montgomery County who is interested in obtaining their PEMA certifications can contact Heather Stem at hstem@montcopa.org for additional information.

Individuals receiving their certifications this month include:

**PEMA Basic Level**

Thomas Dimmerling, Upper Providence Township  
John Ernst, Lansdale Borough  
Matt Maillie, MCDPS  
Dan Melville, Schwenksville Borough  
James Staufenberg, MCDPS - Special Operations  
Melissa Willson, Upper Providence Township
Firefighters Graduate from Entry Level Training

On Wednesday, May 19th, the Montgomery County Fire Academy held a virtual graduation ceremony for the 37 firefighters of Class 2003 to celebrate their completion of the Pennsylvania Entry Level Fire Fighter program.

The students of Class 2003 had their training interrupted by the COVID-19 Pandemic in March 2020 but returned to training in July.

Department of Public Safety Interim Director Mike Vest was the Commencement Speaker. Firefighter Benjamin Kangas of the Manoa Fire Company received the award for the highest grade in the Interior Firefighter course.

Congratulations to the following graduates:

Firefighter Elias Bell, East Greenville Fire Co.
Firefighter Matthias Bell, East Greenville Fire Co.
Firefighter Nathaniel Bender, Merion Fire Co.
Firefighter Brandon Bonafino, Manoa Fire Co.
Firefighter Zachery Brisbon, Upper Gwynedd Fire Co.
Firefighter Peyton Chippie, Lower Frederick Fire Co.
Firefighter Tyler Collisson, Lower Frederick Fire Co.
Firefighter Dimitri Desmet, Spring Mill Fire Co.
Firefighter Eric Dietch, Worcester Fire Co.
Firefighter Jeffrey Elsca, Merion Fire Co.
Firefighter Aaron Epstein, Union Fire Co.
Firefighter Thomas Farrell, Fame Fire Co.
Firefighter Kelsey Forsyth, Harmonville Fire Co.
Firefighter Myles Gamble, Swedeland Fire Co.
Firefighter Mary Giordano, Norriton Fire Co.
Firefighter Robert Hanshaw, Perkiomen Fire Co.
Firefighter Michael Harrison, Lower Providence Fire Co.
Firefighter Trevor Heins, Barren Hill Fire Co.
Firefighter Kristin Irons, Black Rock Fire Co.

Firefighter Benjamin Kangas, Manoa Fire Co.
Firefighter Brienne Krier, Spring Mill Fire Co.
Firefighter Hope Mitchell, Harmonville Fire Co.
Firefighter Anthony Muscetta, Brookline Fire Co.
Firefighter Michaelene Pacholski, Skippack Fire Co.
Firefighter Brandon Pursell, Limerick Fire Co.
Firefighter Robert Rymarowicz, Black Rock Fire Co.
Firefighter Mario Sabino, Harmonville Fire Co.
Firefighter Gabriella Saylor, Centre Square Fire Co.
Firefighter Jeffrey Scheckner, Highland Park Fire Co.
Firefighter Brittany Sciba, New Hanover Fire Co.
Firefighter Geoffrey Snelling, Phoenixville Fire Co.
Firefighter Jackson Snider, Gladwyne Fire Co.
Firefighter Jeffrey Swiderski Sr., North End Fire Co.
Firefighter Mark Thompson, Centre Square Fire Co.
Firefighter Elijah Ward, Black Rock Fire Co.
Firefighter Lea Wunderlich, Upper Pottsgrove Fire Co.
Firefighter Michael Young, Manoa Fire Co.
Cradlepoint Modem Deployment Continues for EMS Agencies

The Department of Public Safety is ready to move to the next phase of deploying modems and antennas, acquired through the Homeland Security Grant Program, for emergency responder vehicles. Department staff have so far deployed a total of about 450 modems to about 45 police departments. We are now ready to begin deploying equipment to all EMS agencies throughout Montgomery County.

In order to receive the new modems, EMS agencies should email the following information to DPSCADHelp@montcopa.org:

- Agency name
- Agency contact(s) who are authorized to sign for and pick up equipment for the agency
- Vehicle list with identification numbers of vehicles currently equipped with Sierra Wireless modems

All responder agencies are required to switch to these new modems as the Sierra Wireless modems are end-of-life and are no longer being repaired by the manufacturer.

The modems and antennas are being provided free of charge in a 1-for-1 swap for the old Sierra Wireless modems. Agencies are responsible for installation charges and carrier data plans. These new modems and antennas provide better speed and coverage as they capable of accessing all 4G frequencies, many of which had not been deployed by the cell carriers during initial Sierra Wireless implementation.

These new devices, along with upgrades made to our servers, now allow us to be carrier agnostic, meaning if another wireless carrier has better coverage in your response area, you are now able to utilize them. Agencies MUST advise the Department of Public Safety before any carrier changes are made and you MUST have a Cradlepoint installed before doing so. The Sierra Wireless modems are tied to Verizon and cannot be switched.

Radio Reprogramming Effort Underway

The Department of Public Safety has begun removing the old radio system from mobile and portable radios in the field. Department staff are reaching out to individual agencies to schedule this programming. There is no need to reach out to MCDPS regarding this initiative. Once we are ready for your agency, we will contact you.

As a reminder, on the day of your re-programming appointment, please ensure:

- The portable and mobile radios are easily accessible
- All accessories (speaker mics, cases, etc.) are removed from the radios
- The side programming/accessory port cover is removed from all portable radios
- All portable radios batteries are charged

Each portable radio will take approximately five (5) minutes to fully program and each mobile will take approximately 20 minutes. During programming, any favorites stored in the ‘Favorites’ bank of each radio will be cleared out and will need to be re-programmed by your agency personnel (an instruction sheet will be provided to assist).

Thank you in advance for your flexibility and willingness to work with the Department of Public Safety on this project.
Department of Public Safety Personnel Changes

**Stephanie Barber** is the Department of Public Safety's newest Assistant Training Coordinator. She previously served as a 9-1-1 telecommunicator for 13 years and has been a Communications Training Officer (CTO) for over nine years. In her new role, Stephanie will be assisting with the comprehensive training and education program for new telecommunicator trainees and training projects for current telecommunicators. She spent nine years on night shift and is one of the few telecommunicators who has had a permanent assignment to all four platoons over the course of her career. Outside of work she enjoys knitting, watching movies, and walking, but is typically found buying groceries for her two voracious teenage sons.

sbarber@montcopa.org
(610) 631-6500
Emergency Operations Center

COVID-19 Pandemic: Key Information for First Responders

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

The Department of Public Safety continues to fulfill critical need resource requests for first responder agencies during the COVID-19 pandemic. As normal supply chains continue to come back online, please utilize your local procurement procedures prior to submitting resource requests. If you do have a critical PPE need, please submit all resource requests to EOCLogistics@montcopa.org.

**Exposure Reporting Process**

If you are a first responder (law enforcement, fire, EMS, or emergency management) and believe you were exposed to COVID-19 in the course of your duties, follow these steps:

1) Immediately notify your supervisor or agency infection control officer.

2) Avoid contact with others, maintain social distance (at least 6 feet), and self-monitor for symptoms (check temperature twice a day and watch for fever, cough, or shortness of breath). You will receive formal instructions to quarantine, if necessary, from the Montgomery County Office of Public Health.

3) Complete the First Responder Self-Report Form: http://episurvey.mcad911.com/EpiInfoWebSurvey/Home/a85581e8-ef39-478d-ad2c-76bbf1a44b50. This form is used to formally document the impact of COVID-19 on the community as well as document the source of a potential exposure.

4) Register to be tested. You can receive a test at any one of the 6 County-run test sites (https://www.montcopa.org/3744/COVID-19-Testing), through your Primary Care Physician, or at a commercial lab.

First responders with exposure-related questions may contact EMS Field Specialist Ed Martin, Jr. (emartin@montcopa.org) or Chief Medical Officer and Regional EMS Medical Director Dr. Alvin Wang (awang@montcopa.org). With immediate concerns, call (610) 631-6500.

**COVID-19 Vaccines**

If you are a Montgomery County first responder (police, fire, or EMS), have not yet received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, and are interested in receiving it, please email Public Affairs Coordinator Todd Stieritz at tstierit@montcopa.org for additional information.