County Commissioners Appoint New Director of Public Safety

Effective Monday, June 14, 2021, the Montgomery County Commissioners appointed Michael O. Vest as the Director of the Department of Public Safety. Director Vest has been serving as Interim Director since January 6, 2021, following the retirement of former Director Thomas M. Sullivan.

Director Vest started with the Department of Public Safety in 2009 after a 20-year military career in the United States Army in the fields of intelligence and aviation. He served two combat tours of duty in Iraq and was stationed in various other locations worldwide as an interpreter, strategic debriefer, liaison officer, flight operations officer, battle captain, and instructor pilot. Since 2012, Director Vest has held the position of Deputy Director of Public Safety. He most recently headed the Emergency Communications Division, overseeing a team of 150 9-1-1 telecommunicators and support staff that answered and processed 840,990 emergency calls in 2020.

Director Vest is bilingual in English and Korean. He holds a master’s degree in Emergency Services Management and a bachelor’s in Aviation Studies with a focus in the Korean language.

Department of Public Safety Assists with Major Incident in Lower Providence Township

On Thursday, June 10th, Department of Public Safety personnel and assets responded to assist with a complex incident involving a structure fire and barricaded subject on the 4000 block of Cardin Place in Lower Providence Township.

Deployed Department resources included Field Comm 3, Armor 20 ("Bearcat"), UAS (drones), all-terrain vehicles, tents, EMS rehab equipment, and personnel from the Tactical Communications Team (TCT), Emergency Management on-call team, EMS Division, Incident Support Team (IST), and Urban Search & Rescue Team (US&R).

Department of Public Safety Seeks CALEA® Reaccreditation

A team of assessors from the Commission of Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA®) will be virtually examining all aspects of the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety’s Emergency Communications Division, including policies, procedures, management, operations, and support services, on Tuesday, July 6 and Wednesday, July 7, 2021.

Verification by the team that the Emergency Communications Division meets the Commission’s state-of-the-art standards is part of a voluntary process to gain accreditation, a highly prized recognition of law enforcement professional excellence.

As part of the on-site assessment, Department employees and members of the community are invited to offer comments through a telephone call-in session on Wednesday, July 7, 2021, between 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. The public may call (610) 631-6504 during these times.

Telephone comments should be limited to 10 minutes per caller and must address the Emergency Communications Division’s ability to comply with CALEA® communications standards. Copies of the communications standards are available from the Accreditation Manager, Annamaria Mastrocola, who can be reached at (610) 631-6532.

Those wishing to offer written comments about the Division’s ability to meet the standards for accreditation are requested to write: Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA®), Box 424064, Washington, DC 20042-4064.

The Division must comply with the Commission’s 207 standards in order to gain the CALEA® accreditation. Accreditation is an acknowledgement that symbolizes professionalism, excellence, and competence in the field of Emergency Communications.

The Accreditation Program Manager for the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety’s Emergency Communications Division is Paul MacMillan. The assessors are Julie Righter Dove (Team Leader) and Ms. Rebekah Stephens (Team Member). The assessment team is composed of public safety practitioners from similar, out-of-state agencies. The assessors will review written materials, interview individuals, and visit offices and other places virtually where compliance can be witnessed.

Once the CALEA® Assessors complete their review of the Division, they will report back to the full Commission, which will then decide if the agency is to be granted accredited status.

Accreditation is for four years, during which the Division must submit annual reports attesting continued compliance with those standards under which it was initially accredited.

For more information regarding the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc., please write the Commission at Box 424064, Washington, DC 20042-4064; or call (703) 352-4225; or email calea@calea.org.
Independence Day Event Information Requested

The Department of Public Safety requests that any municipality that is either formally hosting or has knowledge of an event scheduled to occur over Independence Day weekend submit this information through their Emergency Management Coordinator via the Planned Events board on WebEOC.

Examples of 4th of July holiday-related events are formal or informal fireworks displays, parades, running/walking races, and other large gatherings. Municipal officials with questions about this process should contact Jason Wilson, Deputy Director for Emergency Management, at jwilson@montcopa.org.

Next EDITS Date Announced

This month, the Eastern Montgomery County Emergency Management Group and Montgomery County Department of Public Safety jointly announced the date for the next EDITS (Emergency Disaster Incident Training Symposium) conference, which will take place on Tuesday, October 4th and Wednesday, October 5, 2022. The conference will return to Normandy Farm Hotel & Conference Center in Whitpain Township, and registration will open this fall.

Please note that an EDITS Save-the-Date flyer tentatively advertising the next conference for May 2022 was distributed earlier this year. The month in which the conference will be held has been updated to October 2022 due to COVID-related delays.

Law Enforcement Fall 2021 Training Schedule Released; Fire Academy’s to be Released in Early July

The Department of Public Safety’s Law Enforcement Division recently published its training schedule for the Fall 2021 semester. The Fire Academy’s fall schedule will be released in early July.

Law Enforcement (Available now!)

- Training Schedule: https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/31689/2021-Fall-Training-Schedule
- Registration: Registration instructions for law enforcement courses vary by course can be found within the training schedule document.
- Contact: Janine Paul, Law Enforcement Training Coordinator, jpaul2@montcopa.org or (610) 278-3500

Fire Academy (Available soon, check back for updates)

- Training Schedule: https://www.montcopa.org/1006/Training-Schedule
- Registration: https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/26146/MCFA-Registration-2020
- Contact: Cindy Myers, Registrar, cmyers@montcopa.org or (610) 278-3500
National Night Out Requests: Deadline Approaching

The 2021 National Night Out is quickly approaching (Tuesday, August 3rd). Any municipality or emergency services agency wishing to request Department of Public Safety personnel or assets for an event on August 3rd or another nearby date should contact Public Affairs Coordinator Todd Stieritz at tstierit@montcopa.org as soon as possible. When making a request, please try to be as specific as possible in terms of days and times, venue (indoors, outdoors, hybrid, etc.), available space, and your preference for vehicles, equipment, handout materials, and staff. Please note that the Department may not be able to fulfill all requests depending on number and type received.

Firefighters Complete Entry Level Training

Montgomery County Fire Academy Class 2101 finished entry-level fire training this month. Because of the size of the class and pandemic restrictions, Class 2101 was split into two sections: Platoon A and Platoon B. These new firefighters completed training not only in firefighting but also in hazardous materials mitigation, CPR, and first aid. Congratulations to the 45 members of Class 2101 who are now protecting communities throughout our region!
Department of Public Safety Career Opportunities

The Department of Public Safety is currently hiring for several open positions. To read the full job descriptions and apply online, please visit www.montcopa.org/jobs and scroll down to Public Safety.

- **Communications Systems Specialist**
  The Communications Systems Specialist is primarily responsible for installing and troubleshooting mobile voice and data communications equipment in a Public Safety environment. He/she maintains broadband wireless mobile data equipment utilizing IP networks, public safety software applications such as Computer Aided Dispatching (CAD), Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL), and communications console equipment.

- **Emergency Preparedness Specialist (Chemical Safety Program)**
  The Emergency Preparedness Specialist (Chemical Safety Program) 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 the facilities in question.

- **Radiological Planner – Part Time**
  The Radiological Planner is responsible for radiological emergency response planning and training. The position produces or reviews emergency plans for response to incidents at the Limerick Generating Station ("LGS"), and coordinates County, municipal, and school participation in associated drills. Other duties will include maintenance, calibration, and operational checks of radiological response equipment, to include decontamination equipment, radiological meters, and radiological dosimetry; training program review and creation; and training required to provide perform job tasks.

- **Training Coordinator – EMS**
  The EMS Training Coordinator supervises and coordinates all activities associated with operations of all EMS Training Programs and the EMS Training Institute. The position assesses the Division’s EMS training needs and the development of a training schedule to address those needs. Classes include but are not limited to multiple EMT, Paramedic, hundreds of continuing education classes, and about two dozen specialty courses. The position also manages the continuing education and certification programs for the Pennsylvania Department of Health - Bureau of Emergency Medical Services.

These positions require availability 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. These are Essential Employee positions. Essential employees are obligated to report to work as scheduled or remain at work during emergencies. Following is the Duty Statement for Essential Employees:

"Carries out essential job functions or assigned emergency duties which may involve assignments within the Emergency Operations Center, deployment to a field location to participate in emergency management activities, or other duties as required during periods of emergency. If received, emergency assignments may be performed under adverse conditions and continue for periods ranging from a few hours to several weeks."

Montgomery County Commissioners
Valerie Arkoosh, Chair
Kenneth Lawrence, Jr.
Joseph Gale
Outage Reporting Reminder as 2021 Hurricane Season Begins

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.

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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| **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. | • 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. | • Wire arcing  
• Pole leaning  
• Wire sagging  
• Manhole cover missing |

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**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 and EMS agencies. We are progressing through EMS agencies throughout Montgomery County and will be starting on fire agencies in late July. Requests from fire agencies will be accepted starting July 5th. In order to receive the new modems, 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.

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.