Public Safety Appreciation Day Planned for September 11th

On Saturday, September 11, 2021, the twentieth anniversary of the September 11th terrorist attacks, the Department of Public Safety will host a Public Safety Appreciation Day to honor the individuals who lost their lives in the tragic events two decades ago and those who have served on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic. The event will take place at the Montgomery County Emergency Operations Center (50 Eagleville Road, Eagleville, PA 19403).

The day will begin at 8:30 AM with a September 11th memorial rededication ceremony. The memorial, an 18-foot-tall sculpture of bronze and steel featuring hands cradling an I-beam from the North Tower of the World Trade Center, was originally installed outside of the Montgomery County Courthouse in 2005, on the fourth anniversary of the terrorist attacks. This year, the County Commissioners decided to move the memorial to a new permanent home outside of the front entrance to the Emergency Operations Center.

The schedule for the remainder of the day is as follows:

- 9:00 AM: Kids’ Fun Run (100-yard dash at the 5k start/finish line)
- 9:10 AM: 5k Walk/Run
- 9:20 AM: 5k 3-Person Relay Event
  - Each runner will run a one-mile leg of the 5k course.
  - Relay team members will be shuttled to relay points.
- 9:30 AM: Firefighters’ 5k Walk/Run
  - Participate in this event in your bunker gear!
- 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM: Cornhole Tournament
  - Sign up in a 2-person team to participate in a single-elimination cornhole bracket.
- 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM: BBQ, Apparatus Display, Music & Family Fun

Please register for the Kids’ Fun Run, 5k Events, and Cornhole Tournament at https://bit.ly/3Ddhocz. All participants in these events will receive a t-shirt and a challenge coin. Awards will be given to top finishers in each event. Participants in the Kids’ Fun Run will receive goodie bags. No registration is necessary to enjoy the family fun day!

This FREE event is open to all Public Safety employees, first responders, family, and friends of the public safety community! Please contact Madison Sehn at msehn@montcopa.org with any questions.
Open 9-1-1 Telecommunicator Hiring Day Coming Soon

The Department of Public Safety’s Emergency Communications Division is now accepting applications for numerous 9-1-1 Telecommunicator openings! To read the full job description and apply online, visit www.montcopa.org/jobs, scroll down to Public Safety, and click on 9-1-1 Telecommunicator Trainee.

On Saturday, September 18th, the Department will host an open hiring day for Telecommunicators. No appointment is necessary between the hours of 7:00 AM and 3:00 PM. Simply show up at the Montgomery County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), located at 50 Eagleville Road, Eagleville, PA 19403. Please plan to allow 3-4 hours to complete the entire process (applicants who are not successful at any stage may be released early).

What to Expect

1) Upon arrival at the EOC, you will meet with representatives from Montgomery County Human Resources to fill out an employment application (10-15 minutes).
2) You will then take our CritiCall test, which evaluates typing, multitasking, and critical thinking ability. Prior experience in emergency calltaking and/or dispatching is not necessary to succeed on the test (20-80 minutes). NOTE: inability to type at sufficient speed is the most common reason for testing failures. There are plenty of typing tests available online for practice.
3) If you pass the CritiCall test, you will then attend an interview with our selection panel (20-30 minutes).
4) If deemed a qualified candidate by the panel, you will complete a job shadowing session, during which you will have the opportunity to observe and interact with an experienced Telecommunicator in the Emergency Communications Center (120 minutes).
5) Finally, you will complete paperwork to allow for an extensive background investigation, including reference checks (15-20 minutes).

At a later time, all applicants will be required to complete several medical and/or psychological exams, including a drug screening. Individuals offered employment during this hiring period will begin training on Monday, October 25, 2021.

Fall Classes Filling Quickly at the Fire Academy

The Montgomery County Fire Academy has posted the Fall 2021 Training Schedule on the Department of Public Safety’s website and courses are already filling up fast.

However, there are courses teaching skills that are important to your fire company that still have availability, including: Water Rescue & Emergency Response, starting 9/9; Hazardous Materials Operations Refresher, starting 9/12; Legal Concepts for Fire Police (pre-requisite: Basic Fire Police), starting 9/18; Advanced Line Systems Rescue, starting 9/21; Basic Fire Police, starting 9/25; Incident Safety Officer, starting 9/28; and Hazardous Materials Operations, starting 10/5.

Training schedule and course catalogue: https://www.montcopa.org/136/Fire-Academy
Third Doses of COVID-19 Vaccine Available for Immunocompromised First Responders


CDC recommends that people with moderately to severely compromised immune systems receive an additional dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine at least 28 days after a second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine. CDC does not recommend additional doses or booster shots for any other population currently. No booster or additional doses are currently recommended for those who have received the Janssen (J&J) vaccine.

People who are moderately to severely immunocompromised are especially vulnerable to COVID-19 because they are more at risk of serious, prolonged illness. Studies indicate some immunocompromised people don't always build the same level of immunity after vaccination the way non-immunocompromised people do.

First responders (EMS, Law Enforcement, Fire, and Emergency Management) who meet one of the below conditions are welcome to schedule themselves for a third dose of vaccine at a Montgomery County Department of Public Safety clinic.

Moderate to severe immune compromise conditions include, but are not limited to:

- Active treatment (not history) for any cancer including chemotherapy, radiation therapy, or surgery within 2 years.
- Receipt of solid-organ transplant and currently taking immunosuppressive therapy.
- Receipt of CAR-T-cell or hematopoietic stem cell transplant (within 2 years of transplantation or taking immunosuppression therapy).
- Moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (e.g., DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome).
- Advanced or untreated HIV infection.
- Active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids (i.e., ≥20mg prednisone or equivalent per day), transplant-related immunosuppressive drugs, cancer chemotherapeutic agents classified as severely immunosuppressive, tumornecrosis (TNF) blockers, and other biologic agents that are immunosuppressive or immunomodulatory such as:
  - Steroids – daily or regular doses of prednisone, prednisolone, or decadron (not single-injection) at a daily dose greater than or equal to 20 mg prednisone or equivalent per day.
  - Alkylating agents and antimetabolites used for chemotherapy (examples include Cisplatin, Cyclophosphamide, 5-FU, and Methotrexate).
  - TNF blockers such as adalimumab (Humira), etanercept (Enbrel), infliximab (Remicade), golimumab (Simponi) most commonly used for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, psoriasis, ulcerative colitis/Crohn’s disease, or ankylosing spondylitis.
  - Transplant anti-rejection (immunosuppressant) medications such as tacrolimus (Prograf), cyclosporine (Neoral), Imuran (Azathioprine), Rapamune (Rapamycin), and Micophenolate (CellCept).

Those who fit the above criteria can make an appointment for any of the following Montgomery County Department of Public Safety run COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics to receive a third dose.
Individuals should bring their existing vaccination card and are required to sign a self-attestation form to confirm their eligibility for a third dose. Third doses must match the vaccine individuals received for their first and second dose (i.e., if your first two doses were Moderna vaccine, your third dose must be Moderna vaccine as well). Booster doses for those who do not meet one of the above criteria are not authorized at this time by PA DOH and FDA. DPS plans on offering booster dose clinics for first responders once authorized by FDA.

All clinics will be hosted at the Public Safety Training Campus (1175 Conshohocken Road, Conshohocken, PA 19428) in a drive-through fashion in the back of the building.

If you have not yet received a COVID vaccine and would like to get vaccinated, please visit https://www.montcopa.org/3875/First-Responder-COVID-19-Vaccine-1st-Dos.

Motorola Notifies DPS of Change in Intrinsic Safety Standards

Motorola recently notified the Department of Public Safety that a change has occurred regarding radio communications intrinsic safety standards that may affect Montgomery County field user radio repairs and battery replacement purchases. In 2012, the industry-wide FM3610_88 intrinsic safety standard expired. Motorola began phasing out the manufacturing of radios meeting these specifications, which ended in December 2015. After that date, all radios were manufactured under the new TIA-4950 standard.

Motorola has communicated that they will continue to repair radios produced under FM3610_88 specifications, but they will remove any intrinsic safety stickers and markings from the radio before returning it to the customer. In addition, Motorola will no longer sell FM3610_88 certified batteries, as they do not meet the radio industry’s most recent intrinsic safety standards. Any replacement batteries purchased for these radios will not be intrinsically safe.

Motorola will offer a discount to agencies interested in replacing equipment manufactured under the legacy FM3610_88 standard. All questions and inquiries should be directed to Montgomery County Motorola Sales Representative Paul Murray at paul.murray@motorolasolutions.com.

For additional details, please see the Motorola bulletins in the August 2021 Notices.

Save the Date: Virtual Chief Fire Officers’ Seminar

The third and final installment of this year’s virtual Chief Fire Officers’ Seminar is scheduled for Wednesday, September 1st at 7:00 PM.

Assistant Chief John Remillard (left) of the Norristown Fire Department will give a presentation on the Regional Incident Command System (ICS) that Norristown and all of the mutual aid fire companies in that area use for managing multi-alarm fires and other large-scale emergencies. Norristown’s regional ICS system aligns closely with the NFPA 1561 Standard on Emergency Services Incident Management System and Command Safety Scope (Appendix J).

Follow the Zoom link below at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, September 1st to attend: https://zoom.us/j/98713486543
Law Enforcement Conference Coming to Montgomery County

This fall, the Department of Public Safety will host a one-day conference for law enforcement professionals in Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties. Utilizing funding from the Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Task Force and in coordination with the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Philadelphia Field Office, the conference will feature multiple presentations on topics such as foreign and domestic terrorism, social media exploitation, the surge of violent crime and civil unrest, protecting critical infrastructure, cybersecurity, drug overdose surveillance, and intelligence sharing.

The conference will be held on Thursday, October 28, 2021 from 8:00 AM until 4:00 PM at Normandy Farm Hotel & Conference Center (1401 Morris Road, Blue Bell, PA 19422).

To register, visit https://bit.ly/2Xk8sSb or scan the QR code to the right. Please note that this conference is for law enforcement ONLY and all registrants will be vetted before registration is confirmed.

Extensions Provided by State for Fire Certification Testing

The Pennsylvania Office of the State Fire Commissioner (OSFC) recently announced that extensions will be provided for many individuals whose fire training certification processes were interrupted or delayed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to the inability for their testing system to operate at normal capacity during the public health emergency, OSFC is enacting an interim policy to address the temporary suspension on their written and skills exam policies, which typically require certification testing to be completed within one (1) year of the date of the original test. Candidates whose initial expiration dates were between March 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020 will receive an extension until December 31, 2021 to complete both their written and skills testing.

For more information, see the Office of the State Fire Commissioner memo in the August Notices or contact Montgomery County Fire Academy Certification Coordinator Ed O’Hanlon at eohanlon@montcopa.org.

Law Enforcement Division Hosts UAS Training Program

In early August, the Department of Public Safety’s Law Enforcement Division hosted a specialized UAS (unmanned aerial systems) training for municipal police officers and other public safety professionals.

15 students from 10 agencies attended the four-day course, which covered all aspects of UAS flight planning, maintenance, operations, and program administration. After spending numerous hours in the classroom, the students put their skills into practice throughout several real-time scenarios on the grounds of the Public Safety Training Campus.
Department of Public Safety Attends National Night Out Events

During the month of August, Department of Public Safety staff had the pleasure of attending multiple National Night Out events in municipalities throughout Montgomery County. National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. It seeks to enhance the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement, while bringing back a true sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances.

Did you know that National Night Out, which now involves 38 million neighbors in 16,000 communities, actually started in Montgomery County nearly four decades ago? Visit https://natw.org/about/ to learn more!

In addition to providing static equipment displays and offering outreach materials to the public, the Department of Public Safety’s mobile vaccination unit administered dozens of doses of the one-shot Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine to attendees at events in Abington and Marlborough Townships and Hatboro and Lansdale Boroughs.

Our vaccination team will be out again at the Bridgeport Borough National Night Out on Wednesday, September 15th. No appointment is required, just walk right up to our table. We hope to see you there!

Thank you very much to our past and future municipal hosts for making us part of your events!
Cradlepoint Modem Deployment Continues for Fire 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 76 first responder agencies. While we continue to progress through EMS, we are also now beginning to deploy new modems to fire companies and departments throughout Montgomery County. 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 Project Nears 75% Mark

The Department of Public Safety has now reprogrammed approximately 75% of mobile and portable radios in the field, which includes the removal of old radio system channels. Department staff will be reaching out to the remaining agencies to schedule this programming in the near future.

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

**Jennifer Cass** was recently promoted to the position of Deputy Director for Emergency Communications, where she will oversee the operations of the 9-1-1 Center and supporting programs such as training and quality assurance. Jen previously served as the Assistant Director for Operations within the Emergency Communications Division. She started with the Department of Public Safety in 1996 as a 9-1-1 Telecommunicator.

jcass@montcopa.org  
(610) 631-6529  
Emergency Operations Center

**Maryann Longo** was recently promoted to the position of EMS Training Coordinator. Her career began at the Department of Public Safety in 1993 as one of the 25 9-1-1 calltakers that were hired when Montgomery County was getting ready to bring 9-1-1 online. She then became a police dispatcher and, later, a fire and EMS dispatcher. Maryann left the Department for a few years to work elsewhere but came back because she missed the job. She returned to fire and EMS dispatch and then became a Training Coordinator, a position she has held since 2007. In her free time, Maryann volunteers at her local fire company, and recently began fostering cats. Her favorite thing to do on her days off is go anywhere there is sun and sand!

mlongo@montcopa.org  
(610) 278-2666  
Public Safety Training Campus

Bearcat Fire Suppression Capabilities Demonstrated for Fire Service Leaders

In late July, during the joint meeting of the Montgomery County Fire Chiefs’ Association and Montgomery County Municipal Fire Officers Association, Department of Public Safety staff demonstrated the capabilities of the Lenco BearCat. In addition to providing protection for the County’s police departments and tactical teams, the BearCat can also be used to assist with high-risk fire suppression. The vehicle features a remote-control combination nozzle on the roof above the driver’s door, as well as a 2.5” intake at the rear of the vehicle. Many thanks to Engine 27 from the Norristown Fire Department for providing a water supply for our demo!
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](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](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.

Third doses of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are now available for immunocompromised first responders. To register for an appointment, please visit [https://www.montcopa.org/3874/Immunocompromised-First-Responder-COVID-](https://www.montcopa.org/3874/Immunocompromised-First-Responder-COVID-).