Portion of Interstate 76 Renamed in Honor of Fallen Firefighter

One year ago, on July 24, 2021, the Belmont Hills Fire Company and Gladwyne Fire Company were dispatched to a vehicle accident with injuries on Interstate 76 (Schuylkill Expressway) westbound at mile marker 335.0. At approximately 3:23 a.m., as units were preparing to leave the scene of the initial incident, an uninvolved vehicle struck three firefighters from the Belmont Hills Fire Company and one State Police Trooper.

Tragically, Firefighter Thomas Royds succumbed to his injuries and passed away on the day of the accident. Firefighter Royds faithfully served the citizens of Lower Merion Township and Clifton Heights, Delaware County as a career and volunteer firefighter for over 30 years.

Last month, on June 10th, Governor Wolf signed Act 23 of 2022 into law, which designates the portion of I-76 between mile markers 334.5 and 335.5 in Lower Merion as the Firefighter Thomas Royds Memorial Highway. To read the full Act and learn about other roadway and bridge memorial designations, visit https://bit.ly/3BgiB4e.

Special Operations Training Facility Nears Completion

Construction is over half-way complete on the Special Operations Training Facility (a.k.a. “Rescue World”), the latest addition to the Montgomery County Fire Academy’s array of training props. It is scheduled to be finished by the end of August, although this depends on favorable weather conditions and availability of construction materials.

Rescue World, funded in part by the Homeland Security Grant Program, will improve the Fire Academy’s ability to host technical rescue training, drills, and exercises, with a primary focus on vehicle, confined space, and trench rescue. It will also allow for a greater number of concurrent trainings by providing more space for vehicles, equipment, and personnel to operate.

The vehicle rescue facilities and props will include a highway-style guardrail, moveable Jersey barriers, a telephone/electric pole prop, and a sloped area to simulate accidents taking place on an incline, which can also be used for low-angle rescue training. In addition, the dedicated trench rescue prop will significantly increase safety of training for responding to emergencies in trenches, open pits, and similar environments.
Chief Garrity Retires from Montgomery County

Montgomery County Fire Academy Director Thomas Garrity retired July 22nd from an astonishing 48-year career in the fire service. Tom started with the Philadelphia Fire Department in 1974 and was promoted through the ranks to Deputy Chief, the highest civil service rank in the Department, a position he held for 17 years.

As a Deputy Chief in the field, Tom ran the response to numerous multi-alarm fires, mass casualty incidents, and HazMat incidents while overseeing six battalions, 33 fire stations, and 286 firefighters. He also coordinated the Department’s fire prevention program for three years, the last of which Philadelphia recorded the fewest fire deaths to date.

Tom has also worked as the Coordinator and an instructor for the Holy Family University IFSAC-accredited Fire Science and Public Safety Administration program and as an instructor in the Community College of Philadelphia’s Fire Science program for over 28 years.

For the past 12 years, Tom has served as Director of the Montgomery County Fire Academy. During that time, he oversaw the presentation of thousands of classes to tens of thousands of firefighters, providing hundreds of thousands of hours of training. He also started and ran the annual Chief Fire Officers Seminar. Additionally, Tom was responsible for numerous improvements to the facilities at the Fire Academy, including the addition of the confined space prop to the drill tower and forcible entry props in numerous locations, the installation of propane-fired training props, and the design of Rescue World, a vehicle and trench prop that is currently under construction.

Since 2020, Tom has led the Fire Academy through the COVID-19 pandemic, during which numerous virtual online courses were developed and presented. The Fire Academy initially closed its doors but was able to reopen just six months later with robust health and safety measures in place. Throughout the pandemic, the Fire Academy also conducted virtual graduations and virtual Chief Fire Officers Seminars.

During his career, Tom also worked with the National Cancer Institute, St. Joseph’s University, and IAFF Local 22 in a 12 year-long study of firefighter cancer mortality. That research was included in a larger study that prompted the International Agency for Research on Cancer to recognize firefighting as carcinogenic earlier this month – not just a probable cause or a presumed cause of cancer, but a confirmed cause of cancer. That is an impressive capstone to an already accomplished career.

Thank you, Tom, and best wishes for a long, healthy, and happy retirement!
EMT Students Complete Vehicle Rescue Training, Set to Graduate in August

Congratulations to the members of the summer Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training program, who have now finished eight weeks of the nine-week program! On Wednesday, July 27th, the cohort completed vehicle rescue training, pictured below. Special thanks to the Harmonville and Plymouth Fire Companies for their assistance!

After participating in countless hours of classroom and practical training, the students are now vigorously preparing for final testing, both inside and outside of class. Graduation will take place on Thursday, August 4th at 1:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Training Campus. Way to go!

Sign-On Bonus Now Available for New 9-1-1 Telecommunicators

The Department of Public Safety continues to seek candidates for the role of 9-1-1 Telecommunicator. Applicants to the position are now eligible for a sign-on bonus if selected. Here are the specifics:

- The **one-time** bonus will be equal to 10% of the base annual salary at the time of hire (Starting salary: $36,771.42).
- The employee must complete a 90-day introductory period. Payment will be made on the second payday following the successful completion of this period.
- The bonus is subject to state and federal taxes.
- The employee must remain with the Department of Public Safety for at least one year from the date of hire. Otherwise, the employee will need to pay back a prorated portion of the bonus depending on the length of time employed.

Other benefits of the job include:

- Excellent & affordable health insurance
- 120 hours of vacation/personal time annually (160 hours after 5 years of service), plus sick time
- Paid parental leave of 6 weeks per child (not charged against accrued time off)
- Pension
- Up to $5,250 per year in education/tuition reimbursement
- Eligible for Public Service Loan Forgiveness

To view the full job description and to apply online, visit [www.montcopa.org/911](http://www.montcopa.org/911). Learn more about Montgomery County employee benefits at [www.montcopa.org/benefits](http://www.montcopa.org/benefits).
County and Municipal Emergency Managers Earn PEMA Certifications

Over the past month, numerous municipal emergency management professionals across Montgomery County, as well as Department of Public Safety staff, have been presented with their Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) certifications. Congratulations to the following individuals:

**Professional Level**
Andrew Backlund, Montgomery Township
Nathaniel DiDonato, Whitemarsh Township
William Wiegman, Montgomery Township

**Advanced Level**
Jordan Bandy, MCDPS
Andrew Getka, Lower Providence Township
Jessica Rhoads, MCDPS
Brian Spatz, MCDPS
James Staufenberg, MCDPS

**Basic Level**
Samantha Kaisinger, East Norriton Twp.
Blaze Lynch, MCDPS
Craig Michelbacher, MCDPS

Wayne Stevens, Pennsburg Borough
Summer Yambrick, MCDPS

Interested in pursuing your PEMA certifications? Contact Training and Preparedness Coordinator Amanda Brady at abrady@montcopa.org to get started today!

Clockwise from top left: Jessica Rhoads, Nathaniel DiDonato, Blaze Lynch, Wayne Stevens, Andrew Getka, Craig Michelbacher (with Director Vest), James Staufenberg (with Director Vest), Summer Yambrick (with Director Vest), and Brian Spatz (with Director Vest).
US&R Team Holds Advanced Shoring Drill

In early July, the Montgomery County Urban Search & Rescue (US&R) Team held an advanced shoring drill at the Public Safety Training Campus. Technicians were presented with a scenario in which a tornado had damaged a large concrete precast wall panel at a big box store. The wall panel, estimated to be 8" thick, 24' tall, 20' wide, and weighing 48,000 lbs., was leaning 10° from vertical.

Technicians worked to construct raker shores to stabilize the wall panel and allow for search and rescue. US&R Structures Specialists were on-site confirming the calculations to ensure that all angles, lumber, and nailing patterns were sufficient to support the designed load.

Fire Academy Releases Fall 2022 Training Schedule

The Montgomery County Fire Academy's Fall 2022 Training Schedule is now available! Visit www.montcopa.org/1006/Training-Schedule to register for classes today.

The fall semester schedule, which runs from August 30th to December 7th, features:

- 49 total courses
- 11 online/virtual courses
- 18 single-day courses
- 5 single-weekend courses (Saturday and Sunday)
- All 4 Entry Level modules (Firefighter I)
- 5 HazMat Ops Refreshers
- 13 rescue courses (water, rope, vehicle, confined space, trench, general requirements)

Department of Public Safety Personnel Changes

Rachel Molinaro is the Department of Public Safety’s new Customer Service Representative. She came to Montgomery County after 13 years in the dental healthcare field, where she worked as a dental assistant, front desk receptionist, lab tech, and more. In her spare time, Rachel works as a fitness instructor at a studio in Phoenixville, where she teaches boxing and strength classes. Rachel has a strong passion for fitness and loves sharing it with others, while simultaneously helping them achieve their goals.

rmolinaro@montcopa.org
(610) 631-6500
Emergency Operations Center
Department of Public Safety Career Opportunities

In addition to multiple vacancies for **9-1-1 Telecommunicator Trainee**, the Department of Public Safety is also hiring for several other roles. For more information or to apply online, visit [www.montcopa.org/jobs](http://www.montcopa.org/jobs) or click on the links below.

- The **Assistant 9-1-1 Facility System Technician** is responsible for assisting with the constant readiness of the electrical, mechanical, and environmental systems which service all Department of Public Safety buildings, sites, and facilities, including, but not limited to, the 9-1-1 Communications Center, Backup 9-1-1 facility, and 30 remote 9-1-1 tower sites throughout Montgomery County.

- The **EMS Training Assistant** is responsible for coordinating training resources; scheduling and teaching both credential-producing as well as continuing education for Paramedics, AEMT, EMTs, EMRs, and laypersons from the community.

- The **Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Paramedic** functions as a core member of the Mobile Integrated Health Program within the Department of Public Safety and work collaboratively with multiple offices of the Montgomery County Department of Health & Human Services to address the issues of complex patients who use the Emergency Department.

To learn about the many benefits of working for Montgomery County, visit [www.montcopa.org/benefits](http://www.montcopa.org/benefits).

**Registration Now Open for Fall EMT Program**

The Montgomery County EMS Training Institute is now accepting registrations for its fall 2022 Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training program.

- Dates: September 27, 2022 through March 30, 2023
- Days/Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays (6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.) plus one Saturday per month (TBD)
- Location: Montgomery County Public Safety Training Campus - 1175 Conshohocken Rd, Conshohocken, PA 19428
- Requirements: internet access and a laptop or tablet

The course flyer is available in the July 2022 Notices. To register online, visit [http://emstrainingcenter.org](http://emstrainingcenter.org) (Deadline: 9/5/22). To pay the course fee via credit card, visit [https://www.veloctypayment.com/client/montgomerycountypa/publicsafety/index.htm](https://www.veloctypayment.com/client/montgomerycountypa/publicsafety/index.htm)

With questions, contact the Montgomery County EMS Training Institute at (610) 287-2666.

**COVID-19 Vaccine Remains Available to Responders by Request**

As the demand for COVID-19 vaccines among first responders has decreased, the Department of Public Safety paused regular vaccine clinics at the end of February 2022. If you are a Montgomery County first responder (EMS, law enforcement, firefighter, or emergency management official) who needs a COVID-19 vaccine (any dose), please fill out this form: [https://forms.office.com/r/psjSSsGfZe](https://forms.office.com/r/psjSSsGfZe)
2022 EDITS "An Evening for Volunteers" Coming Soon

This fall, the Eastern Montco Emergency Management Group and Montgomery County Department of Public Safety will again offer An Evening for Volunteers on the night before the EDITS conference begins. The event will take place on Monday, October 3rd from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Normandy Farm Hotel & Conference Center in Blue Bell. Topics and speakers will include:

- Surfside Condominium Collapse (near Miami, Florida)
  - Chief Ray Jadallah, Miami-Dade Fire Rescue
  - Chief Dave Downey, Deputy Coordinator, Florida Statewide Emergency Response Plan
- Morris City Lithium Battery Warehouse Fire
  - Chief Tracey Steffes, Morris City Fire Protection & Ambulance District

This event is offered at no cost to volunteer firefighters and EMS personnel within Montgomery County. The out-of-county registration fee is $15.00/person. For more information, see the flyer in the May Notices.

Preregistration is required, both for An Evening for Volunteers and for the full EDITS conference. Individuals interested in attending are encouraged to register as soon as possible, as space is limited. Register at https://www.emema.org/event/edits-2022/.

Fit Testing Machine Available for First Responder Agencies

As part of the Department of Public Safety’s Health and Safety Development program, police, fire, and EMS agencies are reminded of the availability of the Department’s quantitative fit testing machine. The device is capable of quantitative fit testing soft N-95 or similar respirators, as well as half- and full-face respirators. Quantitative fit testing can provide more accurate results than qualitative fit testing.

In addition, the device is capable of connecting with an agency-supplied laptop to help maintain automated fit-testing records and track respirator pass/fail status. For more information about the device’s capabilities, please visit: https://accutec.com/accufit-9000/. To borrow the device at no-cost, please contact Madison Sehn, Health and Safety Specialist, at msehn@montcopa.org for an orientation session.

Electronic Naloxone Request Form Now Available

Utilizing grant funding from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD), the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety distributes Narcan® (naloxone) nasal spray for use in response to opioid overdoses. First responders and other pre-approved organizations can receive Narcan® through this grant.

To request a supply of Narcan®, approved organizations can click on the link below or use the QR code to the right. After the Department of Public Safety approves or rejects the request, the requestor will receive an email.

Request Narcan® Here

Organizations not previously approved can contact the Department of Public Safety at (610) 631-6500 on weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. to be considered for this program.