Department of Public Safety Releases 2021 Annual Report

On Thursday, September 29th, the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety published and released its 2021 Annual Report. Formatted as an ArcGIS StoryMap, the Annual Report is intended to provide partner agencies and community members with the opportunity to learn about the Department’s work and revisit some important activities and statistics from the past year.

“I am extremely proud of what DPS was able to and continues to accomplish,” said Michael O. Vest, Director of the Department of Public Safety. “If you look at all we have gone through - the struggles associated with COVID, an issue we are still dealing with, and the countywide damage caused by the historic storms - the department met these challenges while serving the community well. We were asked to do more than ever before, and the team not only rose to the task but persevered through it all.”

The 2021 Annual Report is available for viewing by the public at https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ed96e51d90ea42d793b466cd3f4b0bbb.

Suicide Prevention Month and First Responder Mental Health

September is Suicide Prevention Month - a time to bring awareness and advocacy to mental health and destigmatize this challenging topic. Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, background, or career path.

This resonates particularly close to home amongst first responders, a field in which suicide is the second leading cause of death. Changing the culture surrounding mental health takes the whole community. That is why it’s so important to speak up about struggles with mental health, challenging calls, or particularly difficult shifts. Together we can work to destigmatize the topic of mental health as a whole and encourage others to seek help or talk about how they’re feeling.

The Department of Public Safety is committed to supporting the health and wellness of all first responders. If you need support, or know someone who may need support, please reach out.

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Health & Safety Specialist
(610) 945-4060
msehn@montcopa.org

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Chief Medical Officer
Regional EMS Medical Director
(610) 631-3098
awang@montcopa.org

To download a copy of the flyer, click here.
Police Chiefs Visit the Montgomery County EOC

On Wednesday, September 21st, over 50 chiefs and command officers from 41 municipal police departments, County detectives, and the Pennsylvania State Police attended an information session at the Montgomery County Emergency Operations Center. Numerous Department of Public Safety staff spoke to the chiefs about assets and services that are available to them at the County level.

The Department of Public Safety would like to thank all of the chiefs who attended or sent a representative in their stead and, in particular, the members of the executive board of the Police Chiefs’ Association of Montgomery County, who were instrumental in planning this event. Many of the attendees are pictured below, along with Michael Vest, Director of Public Safety, and Jennifer Cass, Deputy Director for Emergency Communications.

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.
Responder Agencies Encouraged to Check Radio Antennas

The Department of Public Safety urges fire companies, police departments, EMS agencies, and other organizations operating on Montgomery County’s public safety radio system to check mobile radio antennas that are installed on vehicles. DPS radio technicians have found several vehicles in the field that still have the old/legacy radio system antennas on them, which can cause issues when the radio is transmitting or receiving on the new 700 MHz frequencies. This can occur on both system and non-system channels. For assistance or with questions, email EOCTech@montcopa.org.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>800 MHz Antenna Old/Legacy System 2001 to 2020</th>
<th>700/800 MHz Antenna New System 2020 to Present</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Replace with new antenna</td>
<td>No action needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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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 8am and 4pm to be considered for the program.

Department of Public Safety Hosting MCI Training

On Saturday, November 12th and Sunday, November 13th, the Department of Public Safety is hosting a two-day Mass Casualty Incident Workshop for first responders at the Public Safety Training Campus. The target audience is EMS, emergency management, fire, and law enforcement personnel. The cost is $25, which includes lunch. Register at https://forms.office.com/r/ttU7adP2Ws. More information is available on the flyer in the September 2022 Notices.
Department of Public Safety Personnel Changes

Stephanie Allen (right), Daniel Poffenberger, Adrienne Gaugler, Mystique Robinson, and Diana Sears (below, left to right) recently became the Department of Public Safety’s newest 9-1-1 Telecommunicator Trainees.

Over the next several weeks, the members of Class 105 will undergo rigorous classroom training in emergency calltaking and dispatch, before starting several more weeks of on-the-job training in the Emergency Communications Center. Congratulations and welcome to our newest employees!

Jessica Glickman recently became the Department of Public Safety’s Emergency Preparedness Specialist for Community Resilience. For the past nine years, she was the Program Coordinator and Emergency Management Specialist at Beth Am Israel on the Main Line. While there, Jessica focused on program logistics, community outreach, and volunteer management, growing relationships with faith-based partners throughout southeastern Pennsylvania. In 2018, she became the Chair of the Security Committee, responsible for policies and training. Jessica received her master’s degree in Emergency Management from the University of New Haven in 2018 and has a bachelor’s in Comparative Religion from East Carolina University.

jglickman@montcopa.org
(610) 631-6510
Emergency Operations Center

As a Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Paramedic, Jonathan Serbin will respond as part of the Montgomery County Overdose Response Team (MCORT) to situations involving substance abuse and mental crisis emergencies. Jon began his career in public service as a volunteer firefighter at the age of 16. A few years later, he became interested in the medical aspect of emergency services and decided to pursue certification as an EMT and later as a Paramedic. Outside of the Department of Public Safety, Jon currently serves as a Battalion Chief at Narberth Ambulance and lives at home with his wife of eight years and their two sons. He looks forward to continuing to serve the residents and visitors of the Montgomery County community!

jserbin@montcopa.org
(610) 267-0886
Emergency Operations Center
PEMA Announces Changes to Emergency Management Certification Program

Effective July 5, 2022, the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA) issued a directive making substantial changes to the emergency management certification program. PEMA’s intent with the changes was to help create a common baseline of information for all emergency management practitioners in the Commonwealth, whether they be municipal, county, state, private sector, student, or NGO. In adding a recertification aspect to the certification program, PEMA is also moving their program in line with what other states are doing in their certification programs, helping emergency management peers work towards additional certifications or recertifications (such as the International Association of Emergency Managers [IAEM]), and working towards professionalizing the field of emergency management within the Commonwealth.

PEMA released the directive itself, as well as a summary of changes and FAQs to assist stakeholders in navigating the new policies.

To view the revised checklists and the newly implemented recertification materials, visit https://www.montcopa.org/3312/Training-and-Exercises. With questions or for assistance, contact Training and Preparedness Coordinator Amanda Brady at abrady@montcopa.org.

Municipal Emergency Managers Earn PEMA, FEMA Certifications

Over the past month, numerous municipal emergency management professionals across Montgomery County have been presented with certifications from the Pennsylvania and federal emergency management agencies.

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

Congratulations to the following individuals:

- Keith Gordon, Municipality of Norristown, PEMA Local Professional Certification (right)
- Brian Focht, Horsham Township - PEMA Local Basic Certification (below, left)
- Michael Risell, Upper Providence Township, FEMA Advanced Professional Series (below, right)
Department of Public Safety Recategorizing Water Rescue Assets

In an effort to best support municipalities during flooding events, the Department of Public Safety is re-categorizing water rescue assets. In addition to the existing boat (BT) unit, two new units, High-Water (HW) and Swiftwater (SW), will be added. All existing water rescue assets will need to be reclassified through the below online form. The criteria for these units are as follows:

- **Boat (BT)** - An inflatable or flat bottom boat with a 25HP or less motor, with all required auxiliary equipment and staffing that meet requirements defined by NFPA 1670 to conduct operations level skills in non-moving water (less than 1.15MPH).

- **Swiftwater (SW)** (e.g., Swiftwater 24, or SW24) - An inflatable or rigid inflatable boat (RIB) with a 30HP or greater motor, with all required auxiliary equipment and staffing that meet requirements defined by NFPA 1670 to conduct technician level operations in swift water environments.

- **High Water (HW)** – Vehicles designed to specifically ford water and evacuate residents.
  - Minimum 18” water fording height
  - Minimum 4x4 or greater drive capabilities
  - Survivor carry capacity of at least 6 (in a seated position)
  - Must be able to transport passengers in safe manner
  - Minimum gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of 16000#
  - Defined SOP for operation

- **Marine Units (MU)** - A marine unit is NOT a boat asset, but a vehicle that tows or transports boats or water rescue equipment.

To vet your existing units, or to add new units, fire departments and emergency management agencies should fill out the online Water Rescue Asset Survey using the link below. Results from the survey will be reviewed by MCDPS personnel and will be used to implement CAD changes. No additional correspondence is needed following your submission. Chiefs will be contacted once CAD changes are implemented. You are encouraged to submit information as soon as possible. Moving forward, this survey will be used for all water rescue asset changes and/or additions.

The survey requests detailed information about your boats and high-water assets, so please allot ample time to complete in full. Only one entry is needed per department/agency.

Survey: [https://veoci.com/v/p/form/tkq8cgrsumk9](https://veoci.com/v/p/form/tkq8cgrsumk9)

**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)
Department of Public Safety Career Opportunities

The Department of Public Safety is seeking qualified applicants for several vacancies in the Technology, Emergency Medical Services, Emergency Management (Special Operations), and Law Enforcement divisions. For more information about the roles or to apply online, visit www.montcopa.org/jobs or click on the links below. With questions, email publicsafety@montcopa.org at any time or call (610) 631-6500 during business hours.

- The **Assistant Facilities Manager** 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. Duties include assisting in completing required paperwork and filing with the PA Department of Health, Bureau of EMS to ensure compliance with all PA DOH Educational SOP requirements; coordinating and taking an active role in Quality Improvement and Quality Assurance programs; and overseeing the Field Training Program.

- The **Hazardous Materials Responder (Part-Time)** will respond to releases or potential releases of hazardous materials for the purposes of mitigating the hazard/threat. Hazardous Materials Responders are expected to use specialized chemical protective clothing, detection/identification instrumentation, and control equipment. **Part-time. Multiple openings available. Application period closing soon.**

- The **Urban Search & Rescue Responder (Part-Time)** will respond to technical rescue incidents involving, but not limited to: rope rescue, trench rescue, structural collapse rescue, confined space rescue, technical search, and water rescue. US&R Responders are expected to operate specialized equipment, use Personal Protective equipment, and possess an in-depth working knowledge of technical rescue. **Part-time. Multiple openings available. Application period closing soon.**

To learn about the many benefits of working for Montgomery County, visit www.montcopa.org/benefits. Some benefits may not apply to part-time job opportunities.

*Note: The Department of Public Safety has temporarily paused hiring for 9-1-1 Telecommunicators while existing recruits proceed through classroom and on-the-job training. Hiring will resume soon and will be announced in a future edition of PSN.*