Fire Chiefs’ Association Begins Firefighter Recruitment Campaign

The Montgomery County Fire Chiefs’ Association recently kicked off a countywide volunteer firefighter recruitment campaign, funded by a grant from the federal government. The goal is to recruit 400 (or more) new volunteer firefighters across Montgomery County over the next four years. The campaign is intended to complement, not replace, the commendable ongoing recruitment efforts at the municipal and fire company level.

At the heart of the campaign is its website: www.montcofirefighters.org. Members of the public can visit the webpage to locate their local fire company using an interactive map, learn more about the different ways to volunteer, and fill out an inquiry form. Fire companies will then have the opportunity to get in touch with these potential candidates. To spread awareness of the campaign, all are encouraged to view and share the countywide recruitment video: https://youtu.be/Vf8vPukniBs

The Fire Chiefs’ Association has contracted with The Communication Solutions Group (Jenkintown, PA) to execute the federal grant and facilitate the recruitment campaign. Fire companies with questions may contact:

Jessica Lis
Public Relations & Social Media Specialist
jessica@comsolutionsgroup.com
(215) 884-6499

Leza Raffel
President
leza@comsolutionsgroup.com
(215) 884-6499

Carbon Monoxide Meters Distributed to EMS Agencies

Utilizing Homeland Security Grant Program funding, the Department of Public Safety recently purchased 240 portable Carbon Monoxide meters for EMS agencies. Over the past few weeks, 232 meters were distributed to 23 agencies, with two meters being provided to equip each frontline ambulance or ALS squad.

The meters can easily be clipped to EMS equipment, allowing providers to be immediately alerted if a home, business, school, or other occupancy has dangerous levels of the poisonous, odorless, and colorless gas. The remaining meters are being held in reserve for future distribution.
News from the Montgomery County Fire Academy

As the end of the year approaches, the Montgomery County Fire Academy is pleased to share the following updates:

**Firefighters Complete Live Fire Training, Graduation Date Announced**

The members of Montgomery County Fire Academy Class 2202 completed the last day of the Interior Firefighter course on Saturday, November 12th with their live-fire class. The 35 members of Class 2202 will graduate from the entry level training program on Thursday, December 8th at 7:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Training Campus.

**Date Set for 20th Annual Command Officer Seminar**

The 20th annual Command Officer Seminar has been scheduled for Saturday, January 28, 2023 at the Public Safety Training Campus. Registration and light refreshments will start at 8:00 A.M. The keynote speaker will be Chief Chuck Downey from the FDNY. Chief Downey, son of legendary FDNY Chief Ray Downey, will provide an interactive presentation focusing on fire department leadership, command, and control, both on and off the fireground. Breakout sessions will include:

- Philadelphia Fire Department Line of Duty Death: Lt. Matt LeTourneau
- Emergency Vehicle Operations & The Fire Officer
- Automatic Sprinkler Response and Creating a Fire Department SOP/SOG
- Electric Vehicle/Charging Station Response and Creating a Fire Department SOP/SOG
- Profiling the Arsonist – Intervention & Prevention
- Montgomery County Bomb Squad

Preregistration is required. Email Registrar Cindy Myers at cmyers@montcopa.org. There is no fee for this seminar. Lunch is included. The flyer is included in the November notices.

**Spring 2023 Training Schedule Now Available**

On November 22nd, the Fire Academy posted its training schedule for the Spring/Summer 2023 semester online at [https://www.montcopa.org/1006/Training-Schedule](https://www.montcopa.org/1006/Training-Schedule). Registrations are currently being accepted, so reserve your spot now! The schedule features:

- 56 total classes
- 15 online/virtual offerings
- 19 single day or night courses
- Two offerings of each of the four Entry Level modules:
  - Introduction to the Fire Service (20 hours): starting 2/4 and 4/15
  - Fire Ground Support (34 hours): starting 2/23 and 5/3
  - Exterior Firefighter (84 hours): starting 2/18 and 3/14
  - Interior Firefighter (44 hours + testing): starting 3/27 and 4/27
US&R Team Conducts “Live” Trench Rescue Training

On Sunday, November 20th, the members of the Montgomery County Urban Search & Rescue (US&R) Team braved the unseasonably cold temperatures to conduct their annual live (real, fresh dug) trench rescue drill. “Live” trenches, while inherently dangerous to train in and around, provide rescuers invaluable experience and prepare them to respond to real-world incidents more effectively than any training prop. In a live trench, rescue specialists have to “hear and see” the soil and shoring panels, skills that are difficult to teach and nearly impossible to practice in the classroom setting.

This year, the annual exercise featured a trench that was nonconventional in terms of what is typically used in training by first responders, but still falls within the industry standards for a trench. With dimensions based off a real-life incident in Montgomery County, the trench ranged 4-8 feet in width, 8-12 feet in depth, and was over 16 feet in length. After stabilizing the trench, rescuers had to provide medical care for and safely remove a worker (rescue dummy) trapped at the bottom.

The Montgomery County US&R team carries assets above and beyond what the standard trench rescue cache features. They remain ready to respond with specialized personnel and equipment, both during the holiday season and throughout the year.

Numerous Montgomery County Police Departments Hiring

The Montgomery County Consortium of Communities, on behalf of their respective civil service commissions or municipalities, will be conducting a written examination for police officers in January 2023. Applicants have two opportunities to take the test: Thursday, January 5th at 6:30 P.M. or Saturday, January 7th at 8:30 A.M.

Prior to taking the test, an online application must be completed at www.montcopolicetest.com. A $50 application fee is also required. The deadline for applications is Saturday, December 24, 2022 at 12:00 P.M.

Participating departments include Cheltenham, Collegeville, Franconia, Hatboro, Hatfield, Jenkintown, Limerick, Lower Gwynedd, Marlborough, Montgomery, North Wales, Souderton, Springfield, Towamencin, Upper Gwynedd, Upper Moreland, Upper Pottsgrove, West Norriton, and Whitpain. For additional information, see the brochure in the November Notices.
Department of Public Safety Career Opportunities

The Department of Public Safety is seeking qualified applicants for the following vacancies. For more information about the roles or to apply online, visit www.montcopa.org/jobs or click on the links below.

- **The 9-1-1 Telecommunicator Trainee** (multiple openings available) will be trained and certified to be the public’s primary point of contact when requesting a response by public safety resources. They will be engaged in training that requires complete dedication to the course of instruction and instructors. 9-1-1 Telecommunicator Trainees promote the Department’s core values of integrity, respect, and customer service without compromise. *This position is eligible for a sign-on bonus equal to 10% of the starting annual salary.*

- The **EMS Training Assistant** is responsible for coordinating training resources; scheduling and teaching both credential-producing as well as continuing education for Paramedics, AEMTs, 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 **Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Coordinator** is the primary support role for the Quality Assurance Office in areas including telecommunicator skill set development, correcting deficiencies, and compliance with protocols. Due to the nature of the profession, there will be a need for the QA/QI Coordinator to maintain a flexible schedule that would allow face-to-face interaction with employees assigned to a work group that works nights and weekends. He/she is an effective leader with strong communication and interpersonal skills.

To learn about the many benefits of working for Montgomery County, visit www.montcopa.org/benefits. With questions, email publicsafety@montcopa.org at any time or call (610) 631-6500 during business hours.

Chester County Radio Interoperability Initiative Underway

The Department of Public Safety has finalized the cross-county radio programming initiative with Chester County. We are now able to program the Chester County radio system into Montgomery County fire and EMS radios. We will reach out to bordering agencies once we are ready to proceed with radio reprogramming. In the meantime, there is no need for bordering agencies to contact us.

Thank you to Collegeville Italian Bakery and the Perkiomen Township Fire Company for donating food to support MCDPS staff working on Thanksgiving!
Winter Weather Product Reminder

With winter quickly approaching, the Department of Public Safety would like to remind responders about three important seasonal products: Code Blue, the Weekly Winter Weather Outlook, and Situational Awareness Notices.

**Code Blue**

A Code Blue Cold Weather Health Emergency will be issued when the temperature and/or wind chill is expected to be at or below 20° Fahrenheit. A Code Blue may also be declared during special circumstances, such as when there is significant snowfall forecast with temperatures and wind chills just above the guidelines. During a Code Blue, multiple Montgomery County agencies and private health/social organizations will offer expanded services for those without adequate shelter, including the chronically homeless and homeless families with children.

Residents of Montgomery County who need shelter during a Code Blue can call the Your Way Home Call Center at 2-1-1 or text 898-211.

**Weekly Winter Weather Outlook**

The Department of Public Safety distributes a Weekly Winter Weather Outlook on Tuesdays in November, December, January, February, and March. Using National Weather Service forecasts, Department of Public Safety staff will classify the probability of cold weather (temperature and/or wind chill at or below 20° F) and measurable winter precipitation for each day in the following week using a three-level scale: Unlikely, Possible, or Likely. The document is intended to provide advance awareness about impending winter weather that could trigger a Code Blue declaration or Emergency Operations Center activation.

The intended audience for the Outlook is Code Blue community shelter stakeholders, staff of various Montgomery County departments and offices, and municipal emergency management coordinators. The document is not intended to be released to the general public and is for operational planning purposes only.

**Situational Awareness Notices**

Prior to any significant weather event in their coverage area, the National Weather Service – Mt. Holly produces detailed briefing packages and sends them to county partners. Any package which has relevance to Montgomery County and describes a situation in which at least moderate impacts in the County are expected will be distributed by the Department of Public Safety to stakeholders as part of a Situational Awareness Notice. Note that many briefing packages produced by NWS – Mt. Holly are not considered relevant to Montgomery County responders. For example, some packages are issued for Coastal Flood Advisories, while others concern snow that will only affect the Poconos.

The Situational Awareness Notice will also include a Montgomery County-specific narrative of preparations, timing, and expected impacts. Should the event warrant a Watch Desk or Emergency Operations Center activation, Situational Awareness Notices will transition to Situation Reports.
**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/](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.

**Department of Public Safety Hosts MCI Training**

On November 12th and 13th, the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety - EMS Division hosted a Mass Casualty Incident (MCI) Management Workshop. The course covered a range of topics:

- Dispatch and pre-arranged response plans
- Safety, scene security, and hazard control
- Incident command for EMS and MCI incidents
- Command post establishment, identification, and management
- Controlling response, as well as primary and secondary vehicle staging
- Sector officer roles and responsibilities
- Use of operational checklists
- Initial scene assessment responsibilities
- Triage, treatment, and transportation techniques and equipment

The culmination of the workshop was a full-scale MCI practical exercise featuring real patients, played by nursing students from the Montgomery County Community College School of Nursing. The exercise was also supported by Narberth Ambulance, Upper Merion Fire/EMS, and Whitemarsh EMS, who provided ambulances.

**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](#)