DPS Telecommunicator, First Responders Honored for Role in Whitpain CPR Save

On Tuesday, March 21st, Emergency Communications Supervisor Brian Spatz was honored at the Whitpain Township Board of Supervisors meeting, along with personnel from the Whitpain Township Police Department, Plymouth Community Ambulance Association, and Centre Square Fire Company.

On February 10th, a resident called 9-1-1 for a family member who was not breathing. Brian took the call and coached the caller through CPR until police officers and paramedics arrived. The patient survived and was at the Board of Supervisors meeting with his family to meet the first responders who saved his life.

In addition to Brian, the following first responders received commendations:

- Sergeant Ivan Kosty, Whitpain Township Police Department
- Officer Brian Richard, Whitpain Township Police Department
- Officer Samantha Friel, Whitpain Township Police Department
- Paramedic Christine Tarozzi, Plymouth Community Ambulance Association
- Paramedic Thomas Godin, Plymouth Community Ambulance Association
- EMT Connor Seal, Plymouth Community Ambulance Association
- Captain Joelle Lesniak, Centre Square Fire Company

Great job to all!
March was a busy month for the members of the Montgomery County Hazardous Materials Response Team. On Friday, March 3rd, team officers responded to assist the Lower Providence Fire Department with an overturned propane truck at the intersection of Germantown Pike and Evansburg Road (left). Deputy 81 was the first to arrive and worked with local first responders to assess the extent of damage to the vessel, check for leaks in the piping, and determine how much product was still in the tank. 81 officers then helped establish isolation zones should a failure have occurred in the tank and conferred with Chief 53 and tow company representatives to determine a strategy for up righting the vehicle and offloading product. Once precautionary evacuations had taken place and utilities were secured, the vehicle was safely up righted and towed to the nearby tow company’s yard, where the propane was offloaded into a recovery truck.

On Tuesday, March 7th, the members of the team refreshed their skills on dome clamping and Betts Valve operations. Dome clamps are used at transportation accidents involving vessels that have dome covers located at the top of the tank, which tend to leak product when the vessel is overturned. The Betts Valve is utilized to safely offload product from an MC307/DOT407 trailer, commonly known as a “gasoline tanker,” when the 3” clean out is leaking. In order to train on these important techniques, the team uses a specialized prop that sprays water to simulate a leaking tanker truck and continues to do so until the dome clamp or Betts Value is correctly applied.

A week later, on Tuesday, March 14th, the full team was dispatched to assist Gilbertsville Fire & Rescue with an industrial building fire on the 600 block of County Line Road in Douglass Township. HazMat technicians performed product research, air monitoring, and tested the pH of water leaking in the building and water used for fire suppression.

Finally, on Saturday, March 18th, the team conducted training on a pipe leak tree, a prop designed to simulate active pressurized leaks in different types of piping, unions, flanges, and valves (right). HazMat technicians started the scenario by performing reconnaissance on the leaking pipes and relaying the information back to command. Next, team members began the process of reassembling the bolt pattern of a leaking flange. Once the flange was assembled and tightened, technicians followed the piping and began fixing concurrent leaks using either pipe clamps or valve isolation. The training was conducted outside with temperatures in the low 30’s to add an extra level of complexity.
Harmonville Fire Company Receives Voluntary Rescue Service Recognition

Congratulations to the members of the Harmonville Fire Company for their recent recertification as participants in the Pennsylvania Voluntary Rescue Service Recognition (VRSR) program at the Vehicle and Machinery Rescue – Advanced Level!

The VRSR program is intended to provide guidance for staffing, training, education, and equipment for vehicle and machinery rescue. This guidance is supported by NFPA standards 1006 and 1670. The different levels of the program an emergency service organization may choose from are:

- **First Response**: Identifies basic tools, equipment (mostly hand tools), manpower and training requirements that personnel trained to the awareness level can use to undertake basic technical rescue operations.

- **Operations**: Identifies basic tools, equipment (hand and basic power tools), manpower and training requirements that personnel trained to the operations levels can use to undertake basic to moderate rescue operations. This equipment may be carried on any first line fire or rescue apparatus.

- **Advanced**: Identifies basic tools, equipment (hand and basic power tools), manpower and training requirements that personnel trained to advanced levels can use to undertake basic through complex rescue operations. This equipment may be carried on a heavy rescue squad or other specialized rescue unit.

The VRSR program is a partnership between the Pennsylvania Office of the State Fire Commissioner and the Pennsylvania Department of Health Bureau of EMS, with the coordination through the Montgomery County Regional EMS Office.

For additional information on the Voluntary Rescue Service Recognition (VRSR) Program, contact Tim Dunigan at the Montgomery County EMS Training Institute at (610) 278-5233 or visit [https://www.osfc.pa.gov/State%20Fire%20Academy/Certification/Pages/Voluntary-Rescue-Service-Recognition-Program.aspx](https://www.osfc.pa.gov/State%20Fire%20Academy/Certification/Pages/Voluntary-Rescue-Service-Recognition-Program.aspx).

Save the Date: Montgomery County Hero Fund Fundraiser

While a flyer is not yet available, the Montgomery County Hero Fund has selected a date for their second annual 5k Race, Beer Festival, and BBQ Competition. The event will take place on **Saturday, September 30, 2023** (Rain date: Sunday, October 1, 2023). More details will be included in future editions of PSN when available.

To learn more about the Montgomery County Hero Fund or to donate, visit [https://montgomerycountyherofund.org/](https://montgomerycountyherofund.org/).
US&R Team Prepares for Spring and Summer Storms

On Sunday, March 19th, 12 members of the Montgomery County Urban Search & Rescue Team braved the cold temperatures to train on the Tohickon Creek in Bucks County. This particular location was selected because the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources had a scheduled dam release for Lake Nockamixon, which feeds the creek and is known for producing Class 3 & 4 whitewater.

This type of advanced water training is dangerous, but the US&R team must train under realistic conditions to stay mission ready. Members visited the site before the release to conduct a safety inspection, which helps to mitigate some of the risk.

Rescue technicians focused on the swimming skills required to operate in highly oxygenated, fast-moving water and on direct contact rescue swimming to simulate survivors being swept away. They had to time the speed of the simulated survivor (rescue dummy) coming down the river and quickly calculate the distance from the shoreline so they knew when to dive in to intercept them.

DPS Technology Division Provides Updates for Fire and EMS Agencies

Updated Bucks County Programming for Bordering Fire/EMS Agencies

The Department of Public Safety has updated the Bucks County radio programming that is currently installed in all Montgomery County fire and EMS radios owned by agencies situated near the Bucks County border.

In the coming weeks and months, the Department’s Technology Division staff will be reaching out to those agencies to schedule in-person reprogramming of all radios, in order to incorporate this updated programming. Technicians will also be upgrading the firmware in each radio during this reprogramming effort.

Reminder About Cradlepoint Modem Installations for Fire Companies

Over the past several years, the Department of Public Safety’s Technology Division staff have issued new Cradlepoint modems to replace the old Sierra wireless modems in Montgomery County fire company vehicles. To date, hundreds of these new Cradlepoint modems have been installed. However, there are about 80 modems that have been issued to various fire agencies that are not yet installed.

The Department of Public Safety is requesting that these agencies get the Cradlepoint modems installed as soon as possible or, if they are no longer needed, return the modems to DPS so other agencies can utilize them. DPS staff will be reaching out to the agencies with uninstalled modems in the coming weeks.
March Moments

On Wednesday, March 1st, the Department of Public Safety participated in an exercise with the Central Montgomery County SWAT Team in Marlborough Township. Both Field Comm and the Emergency Management Division’s UAV response team attended. Thanks to our partners and hosts for the invite!

On March 22nd, the UAV Team responded to assist with a building fire on the 400 block of River Road in Upper Merion. Pilots used drones to direct hose streams in zero visibility conditions and to provide the equipment operator with situational awareness when moving piles of debris. Command staff were able to watch live streamed video at the command post to inform tactical decision-making.

Recently, two DPS staff attended the prestigious Resuscitation Academy for a two-day session in Seattle. The purpose of the trip was to collaborate with other EMS professionals from around the country and discuss best practices in optimizing neurologically intact survival from out of hospital cardiac arrest. Thanks to our partners at the Resuscitation Academy for a great program!
Department of Public Safety Personnel Changes

Brian McKown was recently promoted to the newly created First Deputy Director – EOC position, where he will oversee the day-to-day operations at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) facility and three divisions therein: Emergency Communications, Emergency Management, and Technology. Brian served in the United States Navy for six years prior to beginning his career in Montgomery County in 2010 as a 9-1-1 Telecommunicator. In 2014, he joined the QA/QI team as a Quality Analyst, before becoming the Emergency Communication Division’s Assistant Director for Professional Standards in 2016. In 2019, he was promoted to the Deputy Director for Technology position, overseeing the newly formed Technology Division. Brian holds a Bachelor of Science in Nuclear Engineering Technology from Thomas Edison State University and a Master of Science in Emergency Services Management from Columbia Southern University. He lives in Salford Township, Montgomery County, where he also volunteers with his local fire company.

Brian.McKown@montgomerycountypa.gov
Emergency Operations Center
(610) 631-6524

Jordan Bandy has been promoted to Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement Coordinator for the Department of Public Safety’s Emergency Communications Division. The QA/QI Program Coordinator is primarily responsible for overseeing the division’s Quality Assurance and Improvement program for 9-1-1 Telecommunicators and serves as the manager of the QA/QI Analysts. Jordan has been with the department for over 14 years, starting her career as a 9-1-1 Telecommunicator. She is also a member of the Tactical Communications and recruitment teams. Jordan is currently pursuing a master’s degree in Public Administration at West Chester University.

Jordan.Bandy@montgomerycountypa.gov
Emergency Operations Center
(610) 631-3026

Fire Academy in Need of Wooden Pallets for Spring Training

The Montgomery County Fire Academy is in need of wooden pallets for the upcoming burn season. The pallets should be standard size (approximately 4’x4’) and free and clean of any paints or oil. It is preferred that they be dropped off at the Fire Academy, but arrangements can be made to pick them up if needed. Please contact Marty Joyce at Martin.Joyce@montgomerycountypa.gov or (215) 436-5100 if you or someone you know is able to donate these valuable training supplies.
Fire Academy Announces Change to Firefighter I Age Policy

On November 3, 2022, Governor Tom Wolf signed Act 155 of 2022 into law, amending the PA Child Labor Act. Previously, firefighters under the age of 18 were not permitted to “enter a burning structure under any circumstance [including a training exercise].” With the new law, an exception was added to this provision:

“except when engaged in a training session for an interior firefighting module with live burns and all of the following apply:

(i) The minor is 17 years of age or older.

(ii) The minor has permission to engage in the training from a fire chief and a parent or guardian of the minor.

(iii) The minor is under the supervision of a credentialed Pennsylvania State Fire Academy instructor.”

In accordance with this change in state law, the Montgomery County Fire Academy has enacted two policy changes, effective immediately:

1) The minimum age to register for Introduction to the Fire Service has been reduced from 17 to 16. Thus, junior firefighters aged 16 or older may now begin the PA Entry Level Training Program.

2) The minimum age to register for Interior Firefighter has been reduced from 18 to 17, as long as parent/guardian AND fire chief consent is received. The parent/guardian and fire chief consent forms will be required at time of registration. Without proper consent forms, the minimum age will remain at 18.

The PA Entry Level Firefighter program includes four modules: Introduction to the Fire Service, Fire Ground Support, Exterior Firefighter, and Interior Firefighter. To view the Fire Academy’s Spring 2023 training schedule and register for classes, visit https://www.montcopa.org/1006/Training-Schedule.

The consent forms are currently pending from the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy and should be available in the near future. When available, they will be posted to the Montgomery County Fire Academy’s website.

Changes Implemented in Montgomery County Email Addresses

Montgomery County is in the process of making two significant changes to all employee email addresses:

- Instead of starting with the employee’s first initial and then either the first seven letters of their last name or full last name (depending on when the employee started with the County), new emails will utilize the following naming convention: firstname.lastname
- Instead of ending with @montcopa.org, emails will end with @montgomerycountypa.gov

When changes are implemented in each County department, the new format will look like this: firstname.lastname@montgomerycountypa.gov. The Department of Public Safety was transitioned on Friday, December 16th, so please utilize these new email addresses to contact Department staff. However, the old @montcopa.org emails will still be able to receive incoming messages for the foreseeable future.
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. After the Department of Public Safety approves or rejects the request, the requestor will receive an email.

Request Narcan® Here

Department of Public Safety Career Opportunities

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

- The Fiscal Grant Manager will assist with the financial administration of the Homeland Security Grant agreements for the six member counties of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Task Force, to ensure financial accountability and fiduciary reimbursement. This position is a point of contact with various agencies in PEMA, Grants Management.

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

2023 Law Enforcement Training Schedule Now Available

The Department of Public Safety’s 2023 Law Enforcement Training Schedule is now available online: https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/38031/2023Spring-Training-Schedule. The document is also attached in the March Notices. Courses include:

- EVOC for SUVs
- Basic Police Motorcycle Operator Training
- DVIT Defensive Driving: Cars
- DVIT Defensive Driving: Trucks

For additional information, contact Law Enforcement Training Coordinator Janine Paul at Janine.Paul@montgomerycountypa.gov.