9-1-1 Telecommunicator Chris Ott Honored by Lower Merion

On October 25th, Chief James McCoy of the Lower Merion Fire Department visited the Emergency Operations Center to present 9-1-1 Telecommunicator Christopher Ott with a “Chiefs Commendation.” On March 20, 2023 at 11:36 a.m., Chris took a 9-1-1 call from a Lower Merion resident whose house was on fire. The caller was quickly overwhelmed by smoke and fire conditions and was unable to find her way out of the building.

Fortunately, Lower Merion firefighters rapidly found the trapped subject, removed her from the building, and transferred her to awaiting medical providers, all within ten minutes of the initial 9-1-1 call. She is alive and well today due to the heroism of fire department personnel, expert care by Narberth Ambulance and hospital professionals, and outstanding communication, sympathy, and perseverance displayed by Chris Ott.

The Commendation reads, in part, “Dispatcher Ott spent...ten minutes speaking with and providing comfort to the resident, all while planning ways to help get the resident to safety and disseminating crucial information to the responders enroute and to personnel on location. He provided the essential link between the homeowner and the rescue team conducting the search and his compassion and training undoubtedly assisted in this very successful outcome. The Board of Commissioners of the Township of Lower Merion commend...and applaud [Dispatcher Ott] for [his] service.”

Congratulations and great work to Chris and all of the first responders who assisted with this successful rescue!

Motorola Issues End of Repair Support Notice for Certain Radios

On September 26th, Motorola issued an End of Repair Support Notice, which they provided to the Department of Public Safety on October 9th. The notice reads, in part:

“Due to higher than expected demand, the goal of extending APX 6000 AN, APX 6000XE AN and SRX2200 AN flat rate repair support for control top and chassis failures through December 31, 2023 is being amended. Flat rate repair support for control tops and chassis components will end September 26, 2023. For those devices that currently have a RMA number and already have been shipped to Motorola and cannot be repaired, the device will be returned to the customer and no service charges will apply.”

To read the entire document, check it out in the October Notices.
HazMat Team Responds to I-476 Tanker Truck Fire

On Saturday, October 21st, the Department of Public Safety’s Hazardous Materials Response Team and Foam Task Force were dispatched to assist with a flammable liquids fire involving multiple vehicles on the Pennsylvania Turnpike Northeast Extension in Worcester Township.

A crew of 16 HazMat technicians was in service for more than seven hours assisting with firefighting foam deployment, hazard assessment, and air monitoring. In addition, the HazMat team provided safety oversight as the cleanup contractor pumped remaining product and foam into collection trucks later on in the incident. The Department of Public Safety would like to extend condolences to the families of the three individuals who lost their lives.

US&R Rescues Subject Trapped in Pottstown Borough

On October 10th at approximately 1:37 p.m., the Montgomery County Urban Search & Rescue (US&R) Team was requested by the Pottstown Fire Department to assist with the extrication of male subject whose arm was stuck in a boiler. After US&R officers arrived and assessed the situation and the Team’s Medical Specialist examined the patient, they agreed that the best initial rescue plan would involve mechanically lifting the patient from his prone position. While responders began to implement Plan A, other US&R members were assigned to investigate the feasibility of and begin preparing for Plan B and Plan C. At the same time, Pottstown firefighters placed a harness on the subject since he was lying on the tank at an elevated height.

At 3:34 p.m., the rescue began. Local EMS and Tower Health doctors administered medications to the subject for pain control and a Tower Health PHRN entered the tank. Using extreme care, the PHRN began slowly removing a compression wrap from the subject’s arm which had been applied earlier to reduce swelling. At the same time, the US&R Medical Specialist utilized soap and manipulated the arm from the outside of the tank, all while US&R members utilized a mechanical advantage from above to lift the patient away from the tank. By 3:43 p.m., the rescue was complete and by 3:52 p.m., the patient was transferred to local EMS.

The Montgomery County US&R Team would like to thank all of the agencies involved in this rescue, including the Pottstown Fire Department and mutual aid companies, Goodwill EMS and mutual aid agencies, and the Tower Health Scene Patient Recovery Clinical Team.
Save the Date for Upcoming Fire Academy Programs

Ice Rescue and Emergency Response

Registration is now open for the Montgomery County Fire Academy’s Ice Rescue and Emergency Response course. This Pennsylvania Fish and Boat curriculum class trains first responders in tactics and techniques for performing rescues on ice. Water Rescue and Emergency Response is a required prerequisite. The course will be held on January 18th, 23rd, 25th (6:45-10:45 p.m.) and 28th (8:15 a.m.-4:45 p.m.) with a weather make-up date of February 11th if needed. Register here today!

2024 Chief Officer Seminar

The 2024 Chief Officer Seminar will be held on Saturday, January 27, 2024 at the Public Safety Training Campus. The theme of this year’s seminar will be firefighter safety and wellness. There are still some presentation slots available if you or someone you know is interested in presenting. Please submit presentation requests and other questions regarding the seminar to Deputy Director Rob Carovillano at Robert.Carovillano@montgomerycountypa.gov.

Department of Public Safety Personnel Changes

Paul Richman recently joined the Department of Public Safety as the part time Radiological Planner while continuing to work as a firefighter. In his new role, Paul will be responsible for Limerick Generating Station preparedness, as well as other emergency management initiatives. He has spent several years in operational roles with the fire department and is a passionate member of the emergency services community. Outside of work, Paul enjoys attending hockey games with his wife and camping.

Paul.Richman@montgomerycountypa.gov
Emergency Operations Center
(610) 631-6500

Kymberlee Milligan is Montgomery County’s new EMS Training Assistant. She has been in the Emergency Medical Services for 22 years, almost 18 of them as a Paramedic. Throughout her career, Kymberlee has worked in critical care, EMS education, and for a busy municipal/9-1-1 ambulance agency. She is looking forward to being a part of the Department of Public Safety team as an EMS Educator!

Kymberlee.Milligan@montgomerycountypa.gov
Public Safety Training Campus
(610) 278-2666
October Occasions

On Thursday, October 12th, DPS staff participated in an MS-1 drill at Abington Hospital, one of two hospitals in Montgomery County equipped to treat radiologically contaminated patients. Evaluated by PEMA, the drill tested the capabilities, procedures, and training of hospital, Narberth Ambulance, and County personnel.

On Thursday, October 19th, Telford Dive Unit, the Fire Dept. of Montgomery Township, and the Department of Public Safety were evaluated by FEMA, testing Emergency Worker Decon and Reception Center plans and procedures. These facilities monitor emergency workers and the public for radiological contamination following an evacuation in the unlikely event of an incident at Limerick Generating Station.

On Sunday, October 22nd, 9-1-1 Telecommunicators Robert Frame, Lauren Vogel, and Joseph McLaughlin (left to right) attended the Penn State Abington Trunk-or-Treat event. They sported superhero costumes to support the Department of Public Safety’s trunk theme: “not all heroes wear capes, some wear headsets.” Have a safe and happy Halloween!
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.montgomerycountypa.gov/jobs or click on the links below. With questions, email publicsafety@montgomerycountypa.gov or call (610) 631-6500 during business hours.

Emergency Management

The Assistant Director of Emergency Management – Special Operations is responsible for the coordination and management of the Montgomery County HazMat Team, Urban Search and Rescue Team, Logistics Program, and other County sponsored response teams. This position will work directly with the management and command structures of the above-mentioned teams to ensure efficient, safe, and compliant response to all requested team operations, exercises/training, and County sponsored events. This position will work with the Deputy Director for Emergency Management to develop operational budgets for the HazMat and US&R Teams and the Logistics Program. During EOC activations, this position will serve as a Deputy EOC Manager, if required. In this role, the position will assist the County Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC) with support and coordination for all concurrent incidents within Montgomery County. In times that the EMC and EOC Manager are not present, this position will act with their authority to ensure operation of the EOC.

Fire Academy

The Fire Instructor delivers fire training courses in various emergency services disciplines including fire suppression, technical rescue, driver/operator, officer/instructor development, and hazardous materials. In addition, instructors may be utilized to teach specialized courses in subject matters such as emergency management, first aid/CPR, EVOC, PA Fish and Boat Water Rescue, instructional techniques, and fire service administration.

The Ignition Control Officer is responsible to safely construct, ignite, and control fires in the Montgomery County live fire burn building for fire suppression training programs, drills, and exercises in accordance with the Montgomery County Fire Academy Standard Operating Guidelines and NFPA 1403 Standard on Live Fire Training Evolutions. The Ignition Control Officer may also be called upon to support additional Fire Academy training programs as needed. This position is designed to serve as a developmental pathway for future fire instructors.

Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Program

The Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Program works collaboratively with multiple offices and departments throughout the County to address the issues of complex patients who use the Emergency Department for the treatment of substance use and behavioral health disorders. The program uses mobile resources to deliver care and services to patients in an out-of-hospital environment in coordination with healthcare facilities or other healthcare providers. This program additionally focuses on substance use disorder patients to prevent unnecessary emergency department visits and establish a clear referral pathway from the field to long-term rehabilitative care. MIH specialists shall be certified PA Dept. of Health EMS workers or RNs with prehospital experience, approved for unrestricted medical command authorization by the DPS Chief Medical Officer, and be responsible for identifying and engaging with various patient cohorts for follow-up by the multi-disciplinary Mobile Integrated Health Team. Available positions:

Full-Time EMT | Full-Time Paramedic | Part-Time EMT | Part-Time Paramedic
Public Safety Training Campus

The PSTC Facilities Manager is primarily responsible for the constant readiness of all buildings, grounds, and their electrical, mechanical, and environmental systems which service the Department of Public Safety’s Public Safety Training Campus, located in Conshohocken. Duties include: performing general maintenance of facilities, equipment, and systems; supervising custodial staff; monitoring overall performance of facility equipment and making notifications or repairs when appropriate; and performing mechanical work required for installation and maintenance of equipment, systems, and facilities in accordance with diagrams, sketches, operation manuals, and manufacturer’s specifications.

Technology Division Reminds Agencies About Radio Installation

Any agency purchasing new mobile radios must have them calibrated and aligned by the Department of Public Safety’s radio repair shop prior to installation. If not completed prior to installation, agencies will have to have the radio removed, calibrated, and aligned prior to programming. With questions, contact Assistant Director Rick Lohwasser at Rick.Lohwasser@montgomerycountypa.gov.

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 this link: Request Narcan® Here. After the Department of Public Safety approves or rejects the request, the requestor will receive an email.

State Reminds Fire Companies of Burn Training Requirements

The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry (L&I) is urging Pennsylvania volunteer fire departments to ensure that a credentialed State Academy Fire Instructor is on site to supervise any live burn trainings that include 17-year-old junior firefighters – as required by an amendment to the Child Labor Act that went into effect in January.

While Act 155 of 2022 now permits 17-year-old junior firefighters to take part in live-burn interior firefighting training exercises, such training may only be conducted under the Pennsylvania State Fire Academy (PSFA) training system’s interior firefighting training module and only when a certified instructor is on site at all times. These minors must also have permission from a fire chief and parent or guardian to participate in such training. Fire companies may be fined up to $5,000 per violation.

This reminder comes after L&I assessed fines against the Northumberland County Friendship Fire & Hose Co./Shamokin Fire Department for the fire companies’ failure to have a certified instructor on-site during a live burn training during which a 17-year-old volunteer firefighter suffering non-life-threatening burns. The Friendship Fire & Hose Co./Shamokin Fire Department was fined $1,000 for the violation.

This reminder is for fire companies participating in live burn evolutions outside of Montgomery County Fire Academy (MCFA) courses. All MCFA programming meets PSFA and L&I requirements.