

Volunteer Today. Chester County Lives Depend on it.
See details on page 4



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NEWSLETTER APRIL 2018

The Responder

An informational source for the Emergency Responders of Chester County

FirstNet is Here

WEST CHESTER, PA _With citizen safety as a major priority, the Chester County Commissioners were briefed on the county's new link with FirstNet, a lifesaving communications platform built specifically for first responders. Making the announcement at the Commissioners' Sunshine Meeting, Department of Emergency Services (DES) Director Bobby Kagel noted that, as the first county in the Commonwealth to subscribe, Chester County's police, fire and EMS responders will more quickly and easily connect to the critical information they need, even during times of major regional events when mobile networks are congested. Built with AT&T in partnership with the First Responder Network Authority, FirstNet gives communications capabilities a major boost, providing a reliable, highly secure and "always on" communication.

"It remains our priority to keep the people and property of Chester County safe. FirstNet will help facilitate greater coordination and collaboration from dispatch to the actual incident scene and beyond, allowing us to better serve the community." -- Chair Michelle Kichline.

Last year, Chester County DES worked with AT&T to upgrade 650 emergency response vehicles. Each vehicle was equipped with an advanced mobile gateway that put the power of information into first responders' hands. "By moving the in-vehicle systems over to the FirstNet platform we are able to take our communications

capabilities to a new level, bringing more efficiency and effectiveness to our fire, police and EMS personnel, giving them opportunities to instantly receive updates, access to records management systems from the field, and to manage dispatch based on the closest units available," added County Commissioner Terence Farrell. FirstNet is the only communication platform that gives first responders priority and preemption. "With the major investments that we've made in recent years, including the development of the Public Safety Training Campus, the move to a new emergency voice radio system, and the installation of mobile CAD units in emergency response vehicles, it makes sense to capitalize on this with the addition of the FirstNet connectivity," noted County Commissioner Kathi Cozzone.



Chester County DES would like to thank all the people involved in bringing FirstNet to Chester County.

Chester County Board of Commissioners: Michelle Kichline | Kathi Cozzone | Terence Farrell
Robert J. Kagel, Director

FROM THE DIRECTOR...



Bobby Kagel,
Director

Project Updates & Monthly Stats

Computer-Aided-Dispatch System (CADS):

- New Fire Station Printing was implemented. EMS mileage will be corrected the first week of April

Voice Radio Project:

- Construction continues at West Chester Borough Building, the Justice Center, and the tower modifications at the West Bradford tower. All leasing is complete.
- We have secured the required space on the Wayne tower site and are working with Harris to finalize their proposal to enhance coverage in the Tredyffrin panhandle.

Training Facility:

- Last month we hosted 1,420 people at 138 events in the Academic Building; 606 people at 37 events in the Tactical Village; and, 346 people at 18 events in the Law Enforcement Firing Range.
- The public opening of the Law Enforcement Firing Range is April 15 at 1300. All are invited to attend.



HAVE YOU SCHEDULED A TRAINING
AT THE CHESTER COUNTY PUBLIC
SAFETY TRAINING CAMPUS?



COME TRAIN WITH US



For assistance with booking, call
John Gillespie, Assistant Director of
Chester County Public Safety
Training Campus at:

610-344-4241

CHESTER COUNTY MARCH 2018 STATS



FIRE MARSHAL

MARCH 2018		7	3	10	1	0
Have you checked your batteries in all smoke alarms?		NOTIFICATIONS	UNDETERMINED	UNINTENTIONAL	INTENTIONAL	NATURAL
		YTD 25	YTD 11	YTD 27	YTD 2	YTD 0
ASSEMBLY	EDUCATIONAL	INSTITUTIONAL	RESIDENTIAL	BUSINESS		
1 Fire \$1,500,000 Loss Reported YTD: 1 Fire \$1,500,000 Loss Reported	0 Fires \$-- Loss Reported YTD: 0 Fires \$-- Loss Reported	0 Fires \$-- Loss Reported YTD: 0 Fires \$-- Loss Reported	12 Fires \$429,300 Loss Reported YTD: 37 Fires \$815,400 Loss Reported	0 Fires \$-- Loss Reported YTD: 4 Fires \$1,950,500 Loss Reported		
INDUSTRIAL	MANUFACTURING	STORAGE	OUTSIDE	OTHER		
1 Fire \$-- Loss Reported YTD: 2 Fires \$850 Loss Reported	1 Fire \$10,000 Loss Reported YTD: 3 Fires \$10,000 Loss Reported	1 Fire \$65,000 Loss Reported YTD: 5 Fires \$454,100 Loss Reported	2 Fires \$300 Loss Reported YTD: 8 Fires \$71,800 Loss Reported	3 Fires \$1,050,000 Loss Reported YTD: 4 Fires \$1,050,000 Loss Reported		
RESPONDER	RESPONDER	CIVILIAN	CIVILIAN			
INJURIES	DEATHS	INJURIES	DEATHS			
0	0	2	0			
YTD 1	YTD 0	YTD 9	YTD 0			
1	1	0	0	24		
ACTIVE ARSON	FIRE	YOUTH FIRE	REPORTS SENT	FOLLOW-UP WITH		
CASES	INSPECTIONS	SETTERS PROGRAMS	TO ASSESSMENT	INSURANCE COMPANIES		
				& INVESTIGATORS		
YTD 1	YTD 17	YTD 4	YTD 25	YTD 51		

Chester County Public Safety Training Campus Hosts the Del-Chester Public Works Group

On Tuesday, March 27th the Public Safety Training Staff hosted the Del-Chester Public Works group at the Chester County Public Safety Training Campus. There were 96 members from the municipalities throughout Chester and Delaware Counties in attendance. Deputy Director of 9-1-1 Operations John Haynes (pictured right) opened the meeting with a big “thank you,” to all for their participation in the recent and ongoing regional infrastructure projects including the task of identifying resources and needs during a large scale debris event as well as providing local details solidify our readiness in dealing with a disruption in fuel supply chain or major power outages resulting in the inability to fuel equipment for disaster response.



During the meeting Chester County DES also presented a focused status update on the municipal portion of the fuel assessment, as well as, an overview of what the Chester County Public Safety Training Campus has to offer with regards to training our public works partners and their staff.

The morning meeting ended with tours of the campus which gave the participants a chance to see the tactical village, confined space training area, and the driving simulator which has the ability to provide hands-on simulation training.

For more information on how you can schedule a tour or reserve a room at the Public Safety Training Campus, please contact John Gillespie via email at: jegillespie@chesco.org or call 610-344-4241.

**INVITE PUBLIC EDUCATION TO YOUR
NEXT COMMUNITY DAY OR
OPEN HOUSE**


**SPEAKERS
TOURS
AND
SO MUCH MORE**



Public Education
Contact us at:
publiceducation@chesco.org or 610-344-5093

DID YOU KNOW?

The Chester County Fire Chiefs Association (CCFCA) has launched a new volunteer recruitment and awareness campaign to promote the importance of volunteerism and encourage residents to become a firefighter, fire police, EMT, junior firefighter or administrative volunteer.



www.helpfightfire.com

**Happy National Public Safety
Telecommunicators Week!
April 8-14, 2018**



PEMA CERTIFICATE RECIPIENTS

All recipients are pictured with Ted Kavanagh, Training and Exercise Coordinator for Chester County Department of Emergency Services



Martin McKenzie,
EMC
Willistown Twp.
Local Basic Certificate



John Gillespie
CCDES Staff
County Basic
Certificate



Loren Nafziger
East Whitland Twp.
Local Basic
Certificate



Lisa Covatta,
Deputy EMC
West Goshen Twp.
Local Basic
Certificate



(L) Greg Lewis,
East Whitland Twp.
Local Basic Certification
(R) Michael Risell, Deputy EMC
East Whitland Twp.
Local Basic Certification



Heather DeStefano
CCDES Staff
County Advanced
Certificate



Heather Gulsby-Steiner
CCDES Staff
County Professional
Certificate



L. Todd Ziegler
Deputy EMC
West Caln Twp.
Local Professional
Certificate



Kevin Gosselin
EMC Pocopson Twp.
Local Basic Certificate



(L) Robert Weer, EMC
London Grove Twp.
Local Professional Certificate
(R) Latta White, Deputy EMC
East Whitland Twp.
Local Professional Certificate

Chester County recognizes 50th anniversary of National 9-1-1 Service

Pictured right, Chester County Commissioners Michelle Kichline, Kathi Cozzone and Terence Farrell joined personnel from the county’s Department of Emergency Services in the county’s 9-1-1 Center to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the system that has been the gateway between the public and emergency help since the very first 9-1-1 call was made in Haleyville, Alabama on February 16, 1968.

The Commissioners also presented a proclamation to John Haynes, Chester County’s Deputy Director of 9-1-1 Operations at their public sunshine meeting, noting that “the digits 9-1-1 were selected 50 years ago because they were easily remembered, could be dialed quickly and were never authorized as an office code, area code or service code.”





Pictured right: Commissioner Farrell; John Haynes, Deputy Director of 9-1-1 Communications; Commissioner Kichline; Telecommunicator, Scott McLimans; Commissioner Cozzone

You're Invited

The Chester County Commissioners and Director of Emergency Services invite you to
**the Official Opening of
the Chester County Law Enforcement Firing Range**

Sunday, April 15, 2018

Facility tours from 12:00 noon
Official opening program begins promptly at 1:00 p.m.



137 Modena Road | Coatesville, PA 19320

It's GO TIME



FIRST RESPONDER WALKING CHALLENGE



**WHICH TEAM
WILL YOU
SUPPORT?**



#TEAMLE

**TEAM LEADER CHESTER COUNTY
COMMISSIONER KICHLINE**

#TEAMFIRE

**TEAM LEADER CHESTER COUNTY
COMMISSIONER FARRELL**

#TEAMEMS

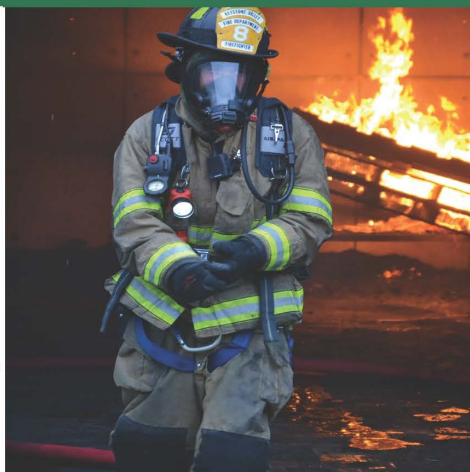
**TEAM LEADER CHESTER COUNTY
COMMISSIONER COZZONE**

Through WalkWorks ChesCo! Chester County is asking anyone and everyone who lives or works here to help us take **FIVE BILLION** steps by the end of 2018.

One way to do this is through walking challenges – and in this instance, a First Responder Walking Challenge!

The work of first responders can be physically challenging, and the need for them to remain healthy and physically fit is important. Show your support by joining one of the First Responder teams.

Choose which team you'd like to support and then get walking!



Signing up for this WalkWorks ChesCo! step challenge is free and easy:

- Go to chesco.org/walkworks
- Click on Register & Track Your Steps, then once you've registered
- Search for the team that you want to join: #TeamLE, #TeamFIRE, #TeamEMS

WalkWorks ChesCo! is free to join and you can set up your own teams and join others throughout the County who are helping us to take **FIVE BILLION** steps by the end of 2018.



A donation to the Chester County HERO fund will be made in the name of the winning team.



chestercountyherofund.com

A message from Lt. Bill Cummings

By Lt. Bill Cummings

I started in the fire/EMS service in 1978, when I was 16 years old. Over the past nearly 40 years, I have responded to countless incidents. There have been many memorable calls. Some because of their complexity, some because of the size and scope of the incident, some because of how funny or ridiculous a situation you've found, and some because of who was involved. Regardless, in this profession/vocation we see things that most people in the general population will never see. We are almost always called upon because someone is having a really bad day. We are expected to be at our absolute best on absolutely every call. We train and practice for countless hours so that we may meet that expectation. There is the perception that those in the emergency services field are "super-heroes." These are very lofty things to live up to. Each of us, in our own way, gives something of ourselves to do this job. We CARE about others! That may sound corny, but it is true. We give of ourselves so that someone else may live, get better, have a home to return to, whatever it is...something inside of each of us CARES! Over time, however, the things we see, smell, hear, feel, experience can take a toll on you.

What then? Who do WE turn to when WE need help?

Seeing people at their worst, day-in and day-out, can wear on you. Remember, we are human first, before we are firefighter, paramedic, and police officer. Because we must remain calm and in control in the face of utter chaos, we will tend to suppress those emotions and feelings of fear, guilt, sorrow, pain until we can no longer keep suppressing and something gives. This can cause critical incident stress and is a cumulative thing that can have detrimental effects for you, your family and your organizations. We tend to develop our own coping mechanism to help us deal with this stress.

Sometimes it's dark humor, sometimes it's lashing out angrily at someone, sometimes it's in a bottle, and sometimes it's pushing those feeling deeper and deeper inside. For me, it's the humor! You never know when it will happen to you. Whether you are new to the Fire/EMS service or you have "been there and done that", you are at risk of it happening to you. "IT" is critical incident stress.

I was asked to write about my recent experience with critical incident stress and how it affected me. My mother



passed away in June 2017. Thankfully, she passed quickly surrounded by those who loved her dearly. It was a very sad time, but hey, we all have to go through it.

"Life Goes On," as she would often say to me. I miss her!

A few months later, I responded to a large, rapidly expanding, life-threatening incident that eventually would require a massive amount of resources to mitigate and would have a wide-ranging impact on the local community. We were pressed to make split-second decisions and perform actions to save as many people as possible.

There is a risk-management statement in the fire service that I will paraphrase, "you risk a lot to save a lot".

This was, without a doubt, a high-risk incident...the BIG ONE! After assisting with the rescue of several elderly, debilitated victims and working for many hours as part of the team to help mitigate the incident, like many of my fellow firefighters, I went to work at my full-time job that day. It was a very, very long day. But at the end of the workday, I finally was able to sleep.

The next morning, while talking to my wife (also a former ER nurse...and my rock) about the incident, I broke down and began crying inconsolably.

She tried her best to comfort me. I needed to be around my firehouse buddies. Rehashing the events that transpired 24 hours earlier with several of the guys at the station, I broke down again. Thanks to several of those guys for recognizing that I needed help.


CISM continued on page 8

CISM continued on page 8

I spoke with someone who helped me gain a better perspective about what I was feeling. I felt embarrassed for crying, but...it felt good to let it out! I realized that I hadn't grieved for my Mom's death. I cried thinking about those we rescued who were as helpless and vulnerable as infants. They had lived their lives and here they are, in the twilight of their time on earth, in their underwear, exposed to the cold night air, in front of strangers. They deserved better, but circumstances dictated what was happening. Trying to preserve whatever dignity they could muster, they were reliant upon us to be their protectors. It is a huge weight to bear. "Life Goes On." There is not a day that passes since that incident that I don't think of those we helped and those we couldn't.

I'm asking you to make sure you take care of yourselves. We all handle stress differently. Avoiding or denying those feelings after a bad call can harm you. It is OK to feel sadness, anger, doubt or question why bad things happen to

good people. In Chester County, we are blessed and fortunate to have some tremendously caring and devoted people in the Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Peer Support Team. These folks are the ones who "rescue" us when we need help. I hope and pray that, if you feel you need help or just to talk with someone, you will reach out to the CISM Team. Remember, we take care of each other on the fire ground AND off the fire ground, as well. Stay safe.



Need to talk?

Connect with the
Chester County CISM Peer Support Team

Facebook: "Chester County CISM Peer Support Team"

E-mail: cism@chesco.org

Phone: 9-1-1 Center Supervisor | 610-344-5100

TECH TIPS: How to get the most out of your portable radio battery!

Only use the specified Harris chargers to charge Harris batteries. Failure to do so can damage batteries, lead to premature battery failure, and in the case of Li-Ion batteries, cause a safety and/or fire hazard.

Remove batteries from the charger as soon as possible after the charge indicator shows the battery has completed charging. Charge completion or ready status is indicated by a solid green charger light.

Immediately remove from service batteries that:

- Have physical damage
- Have been exposed to severe shock
- Experience swelling or other deformity

	Li-Ion	Li-Poly
Charge/Discharge Cycle Life	300 cycles	300 cycles

This is true even if the battery still appears to function properly.

Lithium Polymer batteries have a life span of approximately 300 complete charging cycles. Continued service beyond the recommended cycle life increases the risk of unexpected failure during service. For Li-Polymer batteries, the risk of battery swelling also increases. If you have a swollen battery or a battery that won't last longer than an eight hour shift, it is time for it to be replaced.

For more information on Harris batteries, or if you have damaged batteries, please contact: Bob Lee, CCDES Technical Services at 610-344-5057

Government Service Center
601 Westtown Road | Suite 012,
West Chester, PA 19380

Public Safety Training Campus
137 Modena Road,
Coatesville, PA 19320

NEWSLETTERS APRIL 2018

The Responder



Questions, Comments, Concerns?
Contact us at : eoc-pio@chesco.org

The Mission of the Department of Emergency Services is to promote and assist in providing safety and security to Chester County citizens so they can work, live and grow in a healthy and safe community.