



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Dispatch, First to Respond

Each year we dedicate the second full week in April to those who serve as public safety dispatchers and communications personnel. With that in mind, San Bernardino County Fire honors the dedicated dispatchers of the Consolidated Fire Agencies of San Bernardino County (CONFIRE) who serve as the *first*, first responders when county residents dial 9-1-1.

The week-long event, known as National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week, was initially set up in 1981 by Patricia Anderson of the Contra Costa County (Calif.) Sheriff's Office. Over the years it picked up steam and was eventually recognized by Congress, thanks in large part to Rep. Edward J. Markey (D-Mass). By 1994 it was officially recognized as an annual event.

The joint powers authority known as CONFIRE is the communications and dispatch hub for numerous fire agencies within San Bernardino County, including County Fire. They received almost 132,000 9-1-1 calls in 2015, about 70 percent of which were medical calls, and are expecting to handle even more this year.

In 2012, CONFIRE was recognized as an Accredited Center of Excellence by the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch. In September 2015, their accreditation was renewed for another three years, and remains one of only 16 accredited centers in California and one of 149 worldwide.

2015 was a busy year for CONFIRE; they played a significant role in organizing and tracking all the Strike Teams and resources sent to Northern California to assist with the Valley and Butte fires over the summer. Some of the major incidents back home were the North Fire and the Dec. 2 San Bernardino shooting. These type of large scale incidents require CONFIRE employees to keep multiple agencies in contact with each other and deploy coordinated resources where needed.

CONFIRE Joint Powers Authority is a multi-agency Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services Dispatch Center comprised of San Bernardino County Fire, Colton, Loma Linda, Redlands, Rialto, and Rancho Cucamonga Fire Departments. CONFIRE also provides dispatch services by contract for Apple Valley Fire Protection District, Big Bear Fire Authority, Mt. Baldy Fire, Running Springs, Twenty-Nine Palms, Montclair and Upland Fire Departments, Baker Ambulance, and the San Bernardino County Transportation/Flood Control Department. CONFIRE also functions as the operational area dispatch for the County of San Bernardino, where they are responsible for coordinating mutual aid needs within the county and processing mutual aid requests to and from the Region VI Office of Emergency Services Operations Center.

San Bernardino County Fire Department thanks the CONFIRE team for their hard work and dedication to safety and excellence. We wouldn't be able to do it without you.

To learn more about CONFIRE, visit www.sbcfire.org.

Courtesy photos can be located at www.sbcfire.org under latest news.

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