



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Mark A. Hartwig
Fire Chief / Fire Warden

DATE: April 10, 2015
CONTACT: Tracey Martinez, Public Information Officer
(909) 387-5950, 800-426-8689, pager #3307

CONFIRE a Vital Member of County Fire Team

Each year the second full week in April is dedicated to those who serve as public safety dispatchers and communications personnel. With that in mind, San Bernardino County Fire honors the dedicated call-takers of the Consolidated Fire Agencies of San Bernardino County (CONFIRE) who serve as the *first*, first responders when county residents dial 911.

The week-long event, known as National Public Safety Telecommunications 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. By 1994 it was officially recognized as an annual event.

The joint powers authority known as CONFIRE or "CommCenter," is the communications and dispatch hub for numerous fire agencies within San Bernardino County, including County Fire. In 2014 CommCenter handled over 146,000 calls, about 80% 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. They are one of only two accredited centers in Southern California and one of 185 worldwide.

An important function of emergency medical dispatch is pre-arrival instructions. The CommCenter uses the ProQA Emergency Medical Dispatch System, an internationally recognized triage system, which guides call-takers through a scripted interview to reach a determinant code that is standardized worldwide. This system prioritizes equipment and crews to be dispatched to medical emergencies that precisely meet the caller's medical needs. The caller is given physician approved first-aid instructions over the phone to provide immediate aid until emergency personnel arrive. These instructions range from keeping the patient calm to assisting child-birth or performing CPR.

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. They also function as the operational area dispatch for the county of San Bernardino, where they are responsible for coordinating mutual aid needs within the county and for processing mutual aid requests to and from the Region VI Office of Emergency Services Operations Center.

San Bernardino County Fire Department thanks the CommCenter 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 CommCenter, visit www.sbcfire.org.

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