



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Daniel A. Odom
Fire Chief

DATE: *April 11, 2011*
CONTACT: *Tracey Martinez, Public Information Officer*
(909) 387-5950, 800-426-8689, pager #3307

National Public Safety Telecommunications Week, April 10-16 **Thanks to all of the true first of the first responders!**

Each year, the second full week of April is dedicated to the men and women who serve as public safety telecommunicators. Communications officers are the people who take calls in times of crisis, the voices that comfort the frightened and injured, and the ones who offer reassurance that help is on the way. They help save countless lives by processing and prioritizing incoming calls and dispatching law enforcement officers, firefighters and paramedics to thousands of scenes throughout the county. Moreover, they keep emergency responders safe by providing them with the most accurate, up-to-date information while monitoring their activities by radio.

The scope of a telecommunicator's job includes a wide range of radio, computer, medical, telephone, and mapping duties; counseling the injured; and providing security in times of distress. These highly trained, compassionate individuals play a vital role in protecting citizens and communities alike.

The Consolidated Fire Agencies of the East Valley (CONFIRE JPA) also known as CommCenter, is a multi-agency Fire Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Dispatch Center. JPA members who make up CONFIRE include fire agencies from the cities of Rialto, Colton, Loma Linda, Redlands and the County of San Bernardino. Contractual agreements exist for emergency dispatch services with nine other agencies; Apple Valley, Barstow, Big Bear Lake, Big Bear City and the Rancho Cucamonga Fire Protection Districts, Running Springs and the Twenty-Nine Palms Fire Departments, Baker Ambulance, and the San Bernardino County Transportation/Flood Control Department. In all, more than 77 communities and cities are provided emergency response services within the San Bernardino County area. In 2010, CommCenter received over 148,900 calls for service.

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 world wide. Equipment and crews are dispatched to an emergency that precisely meet the victim's medical needs. The CommCenter also coordinates 911 calls with wireless providers to the correct public safety dispatch centers.

The CommCenter functions as the operational area dispatch for the county of San Bernardino. Under this function, CommCenter is 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.

National Public Safety Telecommunications Week honors the many communications officers who sometimes go unnamed, but are heroes to many. The San Bernardino County Fire Department joins the community in saluting all of these dedicated professionals, and thanking them for their commitment and the sacrifices they make every day. Telecommunicators are the first of the first responders and truly make a difference in the efficiency and effectiveness of any emergency response system.