

# DES Quarterly Newsletter

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## Message from the Director

Greetings All! I would like to apologize for not getting the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter edition of the 2013 DES Newsletter distributed. Unfortunately, in late June all DES staff were focused and engaged with the Flash Flooding event, which impacted the Beech Creek area of Clinton County. This particular storm was a reminder of the power Mother Nature truly has. This storm was tragic and claimed one life and left many residents of the Beech Creek

in a difficult situation with significant property damage. The impacts of this storm caught many residents whom do not live in flood prone areas in a situation they could have never expected to experience.

This particular storm showed us all that, regardless of whether you live next to a body of water prone to flooding or not, it is always a good idea to have an emergency plan for you and your families.

While severe thunderstorm season is all but behind us for another year, that does not mean you should become complacent. It won't be long and the winter months will be upon us and our emergency plans should focus on preparing for those possible winter weather hazards.

Until next time, stay safe and always be prepared to implement your personal or family emergency plan.

## 9-1-1 Communications Center Staff Changes

Welcome and Congradulations to the DES Staff

Through the first half of 2013, Clinton County DES has seen a great deal of change with staff in the Communications Center. Three (3) of our full-time staff have moved on. With these openings DES has gone through a series of internal promotions and also hired two (2) new staff for the 9-1-1 center. The internal promotions are as follow; Robert Moore and Matthew Rodgers have been

promoted from Dispatcher to Shift Supervisor. We have also promoted Joseph Sanders and Jonathan Plessinger to Full-time Dispatcher. Following all of the promotions, in order to get our staffing back to full compliment, we were in need of hiring three (3) Dispatcher Trainees. After working through the interview and evaluation process, we were able to find two qualified

applicants and we have hired Mr. William Harber, and Ms. Sierra McKinney. **"CONGRATULATIONS"** to Rob, Matt, Joey and Jonathan on their respective promotions. William and Sierra, **"WELCOME"** to 9-1-1 in Clinton County. We look forward to having you as part of our team here at the Clinton County Department of Emergency Services.

## Meet the Staff



Keith McHenry has been employed as a 9-1-1 Telecommunicator for just shy of 25 years, earning him the title of lead Dispatcher/Supervisor in the PSAP. Throughout those years he has seen numerous upgrades in technology, i.e. 10 digit emergency number to 9-1-1, paper incident cards to CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch), along with computer mapping, phone and radio systems. Keith

holds numerous Pennsylvania State certifications, including 9-1-1 Telecommunicator Supervisor, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), and is also an alumni of the Leadership Clinton County program. After graduating from Lock Haven High School, he served 6 years in the United State Marine Corps, and is particularly proud to have served as a member of Weapons

Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines (The Walking Dead), deploying to conflicts in the Western Pacific, Mediterranean Sea, and Persian Gulf Regions. Keith has one simple rule he instills among the staff, and that's "Do it right the first time, for someone's life depends on it". He looks forward to soon moving into the new 9-1-1 Center, and leaving the current windowless subterranean bomb shelter behind.

## The New DES & Veterans Affairs Facility

*"Moving our entire operation to a new location will require a lot of coordination and cooperation"*

Construction has finally begun! On May 8, 2013 a preconstruction meeting was held with the architect, our consultant and all of the primary contractors for the new DES facility. Actual demolition work began the following day on May 9, 2013 and there has been continuous construction activity occurring at the site every day. With all of the activity occurring at the new

location, the interior and the exterior of the building certainly have a different appearance right now. However, for those of us that have been looking at building plans for several months, you can finally begin to see how things are going to look as construction is nearing completion, which is scheduled to conclude by November 8, 2013. With the start of fall, the deadline is rapidly

approaching, the staff here at DES has turned its attention to developing plans for making the transition/move to our new facility sometime in late November or early in December. Moving our entire operation to a new location will require a lot of coordination and cooperation from multiple agencies. Preplanning will be key in preparing us for moving day.

## Are you prepared for Severe Weather?

With the arrival of the 2013 Atlantic Hurricane Season on June 1st, Clinton County faces the possibility of again being adversely affected by major storms. With any luck, the challenges we face won't be on the scale of some of the major storms of the past that have had significant impact on Clinton County,

such as Hurricane Ivan in 2004. The challenges from severe weather will not end for Clinton County with the end of hurricane season on November 30<sup>th</sup>. However, Clinton County faces the threat of many different types of severe weather year

around, but it doesn't even take a "major" storm to cause people hardship; even a small storm that would disrupt electrical power for a day or two could certainly begin to pose a number of challenges for you or your family. Continued on pg. 3

## DES Response Team– Station 35

The Response Team had a busy month in August. The Team was requested to assist with the Little League World Series from August 15<sup>th</sup>-August 25<sup>th</sup>. The team was asked by Little League to deploy our Area Rae meters to monitor air quality around the Complex. The system consisted of 12 meters that were placed in various locations to

monitor the air quality. The units then reported back to the laptop computer where we were able to constantly watch the readings. This system has a range of 2 miles. The team worked with Civil Support Team in the command structure. This equipment was bought for us last year by the North Central Task Force at a price tag of \$110,000.

During the event we also utilized NCTF Incident command trailer to support our operations. This provided us with a climate controlled environment, electricity, radio and TV communications. This event presented us with the perfect environment to operate our newly purchased equipment.



## Are you prepared for Severe Weather? cont.

With the potential threats from severe weather in mind, now is a good time to think about your family's preparedness for severe weather events. From preparedness planning to making a basic disaster supplies kit, FEMA's preparedness website [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov), and PEMA's website [www.readypa.org](http://www.readypa.org) are good resources to begin

to learn about preparedness for severe weather and other events that could adversely affect you and your loved ones.

Don't wait until a severe weather warning is issued to start to prepare. Taking some time to prepare before adverse events occur can save you and your family from a lot of hardship, or at the very

least, can make weathering future adversity just a little bit easier. In addition to the online resources mentioned above, if you have any questions about emergency preparedness for yourself or your family, please contact the Clinton County Department of Emergency Services at (570)893-4090.

*"Don't wait until a severe weather warning is issued"*

## Changing Dialing Habits

Beginning in September of this year, you will be required to dial 10 digits instead of the 7 digits for calling that is in place now.

Verizon is adding a new area code to our area to accommodate the increased

amount of phone lines needed in the region.

Any dialing will need to include the area code of the number that is dialed. The number for emergency services in the region will be included. The non-

emergency number will include the 570 area code. 9-1-1 will remain the same.

Changing the old dialing habits will take some practice. The 10 digit dialing is in place at this time so now is the time to practice before it is mandatory.

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We're on the Web!

*See us at:*

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## Charity Scams

Pennsylvanians should be aware of phony charities asking for donations to help victims during times of disaster.

Any organization soliciting donations in Pennsylvania is required to register with the Department of State, with the exception of religious organizations.

You can check to see if an organization is registered by going to [www.dos.state.pa.us](http://www.dos.state.pa.us), clicking on "Charities", then clicking on "Searchable Database", and typing in the organization's name. You can also call 800-732-0999 to ask if a group is registered.

Do not give personal information, such as credit card numbers, over the phone or on line, unless you are familiar with the organization. Reputable charities should be willing to provide addresses and phone numbers, and you should never feel pressured into donating on the spot.

## About Our Organization...

The Clinton County Department of Emergency Services (DES) is a branch of county government, which was created in 2005 through the consolidation of the then Communications Center and the Office of Emergency Management.

This consolidation of departments resulted in the creation of a dedicated team

of diverse individuals who handle the receipt of 9-1-1 emergency calls along with the dispatching of public safety agencies. Furthermore, the team also works to ensure the safety of our community through a quality comprehensive emergency management program.



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