



# The Responder

An informational source for the

January 2007

Chester County  
Department of  
Emergency Services  
601 Westtown Road,  
Suite 12  
West Chester, PA 19380  
610.344.5000  
610.344.5050 fax  
[www.chesco.org/des](http://www.chesco.org/des)

## DES Holds Graduation for Firefighter Class



West Chester, PA: On December 6, 2006 at the Fame Fire Company, West Chester, PA, 26 men and women graduated from the Fall 2006 Firefighter Essentials Program. This program consists of 132 hours of recruit level basic firefighter training. The goal of the course is to provide a person with little or no previous fire service training or experience with the basic knowledge and skills required to function safely and effectively as a member of a fire suppression team functioning in today's environment.

Chester County Board of Commissioners Chairman, Carol Aichele was the guest speaker for the graduation ceremony. She spoke on the history of firefighting; and thanked the graduates' families and friends for their understanding, "...for the missed meals, missed holidays and lost weekends." She congratulated the graduates stating, "I appreciate this privilege so very much [being the guest speaker] because it is a high privilege and great honor for me to look at this graduating class, other firefighters and Fire Chiefs, here to support these graduates and their families, and tell them all just how proud we are."

The graduating class members were from:

Malvern Fire Co. – Lisa Humphreys, William Humphreys and Matthew Welch



Union Fire Co. – Dennis Byrd and Jay McKinney

Kennett Fire Co. – Benjamin Tobin

Modena Fire Co. – Joseph Walker

Thorndale Fire Co. – John Groff, George Monaghan and Sean Taylor

Alert Fire Co. – Joshua Tatum

Minquas Fire Co. – Alan McKinney and Adam Pozza

Fire West Chester Fire Co. – Robert Claughs

Good Will Fire Co. – Stephen Annas and Charles Brogan

Fame Fire Co. – Martin Helmke, Cara Poole and Daniel Wojton

Goshen Fire Co. – William Clemens, Megan Hallman and Scott Stiteler

Lima Fire Co., Delaware County – John McDonald

Congratulations Graduates!

# An Overview of Comm 1



*Outside view of Comm 1*

Chester County's mobile communications unit, designated as Comm 1, is designed to support Emergency Responder Organizations with mobile communications. Comm 1 responds to emergencies at the request of any Police, Fire or Emergency Medical Service (EMS) agency to provide on site communications and command post capabilities. It has the capabilities to communicate with Chester County Police, Fire and EMS units, Amateur Radio Emergency Service/Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (ARES/RACES) volunteers, Pennsylvania State Police (PSP) and counties bordering Chester County.

In response to an emergency request, the on-duty Communications Supervisor will select the crew for the response. The crew will consist at a minimum of a qualified driver and dispatcher (police or fire/EMS depending on event). Depending on the size of the event, the crew

may consist of up to four communications personnel. One of the crew members will be a supervisory level or management personnel to assist as a liaison with service providers. Upon arrival the crew coordinates with the incident commander on setting up on site communications and command post inside Comm 1. Once the crew sets up the radio to meet this requirement all communications for this event will move from the 9-1-1 communications center to Comm 1.

Comm 1 will also provide non-emergency communications and on site support for Police, Fire, EMS and Township personnel at large municipal or community functions.

In 2006 Comm 1 responded to 21 emergency requests and 29 non-emergency requests.

During the 2007-year there are several planned improvements and enhancements to Comm 1. The improvements are designed to give dispatch personnel enhanced and direct access to incident information to better assist them with incident communications and support, and improved interoperable radio communications with surrounding county, state and federal agencies.

The two (2) Mobile Data Computers (MDC) currently installed in Comm 1 will be replaced with remote Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) terminals to provide dispatch personnel with live information and access to the CAD system. Dispatchers will have the same full access and capabilities in Comm 1 as they do in the Communications Center. A Tactical Communications Bridge (TCB) acts as a connection point between two different radio systems to provide interoperable communications.

If Comm 1 is needed to support and provide communications for a municipal or community function, please submit a Comm 1 Request Form to the Department of Emergency Services at least 60 day prior to your event. A request form can be found on our website, [www.chesco.org/des](http://www.chesco.org/des); look under forms.



*Inside view of Comm 1's radio room*

## DES Monthly Update

**9-1-1 Operations:** The 9-1-1 Operations Center processed 24,699 emergency telephone calls in November or about 820 per day. There were 836 Fire Dispatches and 2,923 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Dispatches. The average Fire/EMS dispatch time was 1 minute and 35 seconds. There were 23,648 police responses for the month of November. The average police dispatch time was 1 minute and 53 seconds. We conducted 301 formal quality reviews for telephone, radio and Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD). The combined weighted average of 96% remains well above the Department objective of 90%. We participated in nine Public Education events in November where about 500 people were contacted. So far this year we have contacted about 13,800 people and talked to them about what we do in Emergency Services. Comm 1 responded once to a special event.

**Emergency Management:** There were two full HazMat Team responses during the month. For the year there have been 15 Team responses and 15 Staff responses. The Emergency Operations Plans for one dam and one school were reviewed in November. SWAT trucks were delivered to the three Chester County SWAT Teams. The trucks, valued at a total of \$181,905, were purchased with Homeland Security funds. The Federal Emergency Management Agency conducted an audit of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Regional Task Force. No discrepancies were found in the Chester county account. Twenty individuals completed Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training. The Chester County Animal Response Team (CCART) Steering Committee continues activities to develop a capability in Chester County to deal with animals in disasters. This federally mandated team will be organized along the lines of the federally mandated Incident Command System.

**Fire Services:** There were seven Fire Training courses with 111 graduates in November. Year to date, there have been 1,322 graduates from 77 training courses. During the month, a total of 131 candidates tested for Firefighter I, Firefighter II or Hazardous Material Awareness certification by the National Board of Fire Service Professional Qualifications. We will have the results for these candidates in about a month. So far in Chester County over 1,000 firefighters have achieved some level of professional certification. The Chester County Fire Marshal's Office conducted 120 fire/life safety inspections in November for a year to date total of 1,748 inspections. The fire marshals investigated 33 fire incidents for the month of November. Of these, 29 were accidental and four were arson. There were eight civilian fire related injuries and two firefighter fire related injuries in November. There have been 66 civilian fire related injuries and 28 firefighter fire related injuries year to date. The Fire Marshal's Office conducted four "Juvenile Fire Setters Intervention Programs" in November bringing the year to date total to 54.

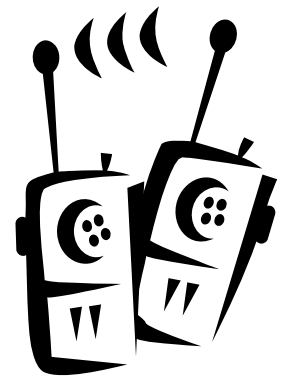
**Field Services:** The fall Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) class finished in mid-December.

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## Chester County Ares/Races Assists with Phone Outage

A few minutes before one O' Clock on December 3<sup>rd</sup> the Communications center dispatched responders to handle an emergency in the Atglen area. Unlike the other 843 dispatches that day, these responders were members of Chester County Ares/Races (CCAR); and the emergency, was a phone exchange outage. These specially trained amateur radio operators responded to the Atglen Fire Station to relay emergency messages to the CCAR control room and then to the 9-1-1 center. This is the second time CCAR has been activated for a phone outage and while phone service was quickly restored and no citizens required their service, CCAR like all responders are trained and ready to respond when needed.

If a phone outage should occur in your area, CCAR members will respond to the local fire station to relay emergency requests to the CCAR control room, which is located in a room next to the 9-1-1 Center in the Government Services Center. The local Fire Chief will be notified and requested to have a liaison at the station. The media will be notified with a press release explaining that there is a phone issue and if a citizen cannot reach 9-1-1 they should go to their local fire station to report an emergency.



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### 2007 Fire Training Classes

**Please call 610-344-5000 and  
ask for the fire training division**

Hazardous Materials Operations Refresher	January 13
Hazardous Materials Operations Refresher	January 14
Hazardous Materials Operations Refresher	January 27
Hazardous Materials Operations Refresher	January 28
Firefighter II	February 10
Firefighter I	February 28
Rapid Intervention Team/Firefighter Survival	March 1
Hazardous Materials Operations	March 19
Basic Vehicle Rescue	April 28
Firefighter I	May 2
Junior Firefighting	May 5
Structural Burn Session	May 12
Firefighter II	September 8
Firefighter I	September 20
Fire Officer I	November 3
Junior Firefighting	November 10
Hazardous Materials Operations	November 13

### 2007 ConEd Classes

**See contact information for  
information on how to sign up.**

<u>2006 Update to State BLS Protocols</u>	9-Jan-07
Location/Time: Minquas Fire Company	1900-2100
Sponsor: CC EMS Training Institute	
Tuition: \$0.00	
Contact: Harry Moore	610-344-5000
<a href="mailto:hemoore@chesco.org">hemoore@chesco.org</a>	
<u>PEPP</u>	27-Jan-07
Location/Time: Jennersville ALS Substation	0800-1600
Sponsor: Mike Groover	
Tuition: \$125	
Contact: Christie Groover	610-255-5915
<a href="mailto:training@statcareambulance.com">training@statcareambulance.com</a>	

**DES ADMINISTRATION OFFICES WILL BE  
CLOSED ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:**

**JANUARY 1, 2007  
JANUARY 15, 2007**

**EMMA & NFIRS Reports** are due on  
the 15th of every month to Bob  
Kagel. Contact him with any ques-  
tions: [rkagel@chesco.org](mailto:rkagel@chesco.org) or  
610.344.5000