

News Release



April 10, 2014
Release Number: 3749

Consolidated 9-1-1 Center Speeds Up Dispatch Time with Station Alerting

New method moves County to 100% compliance with national standards for medical calls, and fire related calls are anticipated to see same results

The [Charleston County Consolidated 9-1-1 Center](#) implemented its first phase of station alerting on the morning of April 9, 2014. This first of three phases uses the Purvis automated voice over radio to dispatch calls for fire and EMS (medical calls).

Basically, with station alerting, fire and medical calls will be dispatched quicker using this automated method because of the reduced amount of steps needed to manually dispatch a call. The station alerting system automatically chooses the correct radio channels and, using an automated voice, dispatches the call over the radio channels using information already in the 9-1-1 computer system.

“We have already observed a significant difference in our efficiency and speed to dispatch units to an emergency situation,” said Jim Lake, Director of the Charleston County Consolidated 9-1-1 Center. “In the 24 hours prior to implementing this new tool we were 79.41% compliant with National Fire Protection Association standards for the dispatch of medical calls. In just the first three hours of operation with station alerting, we became 100% compliant. We have seen initial indications that similar results will be achieved for the dispatch of fire units.”

The County’s 9-1-1 answering and dispatch process now works in this basic manner:

- Call Taker
 - o Receives 9-1-1/emergency call
 - o Asks the caller: “What is the address of your emergency?”
 - o States to the caller: “Tell me exactly what happened.”
 - o Sends the information to the Dispatcher electronically so that Fire and/or EMS units can be sent
- Fire Dispatcher
 - o Receives electronic information from the Call Taker on their computer
 - o Views the computer recommendation for the type of unit (fire truck, ambulance, etc.) that should be sent to the call
 - o Enters an incident radio channel into the computer so units responding can communicate with each other
 - o *This is the point at which the Fire Response Coordinator previously would have selected the proper radio channels and verbally dispatched the call. This step is no longer needed with station alerting.
 - o Presses the “commit” button to activate station alerting system
- Station Alerting

- Using an automated voice, the station alerting software dispatches the recommended units on their specified radio channels providing the basics of the call and the radio channel on which those units will communicate

“Our 9-1-1 Center operations staff has done an outstanding job adjusting to another change in the dispatch process. They too recognize the value of this tool as it will allow them to speed up their process in order to provide a better service to our customers,” Lake said.

Charleston County Telecommunications and Radio Operations Director Bill Tunick is the County’s project manager responsible for implementing the system.

“This has been an excellent example of teamwork among Charleston County departments as well as between Charleston County and local public safety agencies,” Lake said. “Bill has shown excellent leadership in his role as project manager, and his team worked very closely with the Consolidated 9-1-1 Center operations and information technology teams to ensure a smooth and reliable transition.”

Tunick also coordinated with all fire agencies in Charleston County to ensure their needs were being met during the installation and implementation process.

“Although there is still work to do, the successful implementation of phase 1 gives us great confidence that the remainder of the project will go as well,” Tunick said.

Coming up:

- Phase 2 will involve implementing station alerting technology in fire stations so that individual stations or individual vehicles can be dispatched from those stations. Currently, all fire stations hear all dispatches of their respective departments even if they are not involved in the call.
- Phase 3 will have the station alerting system send the dispatch of a call to specific mobile devices such as cell phones.

For more information on the Charleston County Consolidated 9-1-1 center, visit <http://charlestoncounty.org/Departments/dispatch/index.htm>.

For information on Charleston County Government news and services, the public can:

- Visit our website: www.charlestoncounty.org
- Follow us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/ChasCountyGov>
- Like us on Facebook (main County site): <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Charleston-County-Government/474878989220753>
 - *Board of Elections and Voter Registration:* <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Charleston-County-Board-of-Elections-and-Voter-Registration/103895809694986>
 - *Consolidated 9-1-1 Center’s Public Education Program:* <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Charleston-County-Government/474878989220753#!/pages/Charleston-County-Consolidated-9-1-1-Center-Public-Education-Program/186965438015227>
 - *Economic Development:* <https://www.facebook.com/CharlestonCountyED>
 - *Emergency Management Department:* <http://www.facebook.com/EMDChasCo>
 - *Awendaw District Fire Department:* <http://www.facebook.com/EMDChasCohttps://www.facebook.com/pages/Awendaw-District-Fire-Department/505429932850932>
 - *Zoning and Planning Department:* <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Charleston-County-Government/474878989220753#!/pages/Charleston-County-Zoning-Planning-Department/549596221765813>
 - *Sheriff’s Office:* <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Charleston-County-Government/474878989220753#!/pages/Charleston-County-Sheriffs-Office/557956290949818>

- See us on You Tube: <http://www.youtube.com/user/charlestoncountygov>
- Watch County Council meetings online <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/charleston-county-government>



- written by Jennie Flinn -