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Issue 9 | Volume 6 | September 2018

**Massachusetts**  
**State 911 Department**  
*Newsletter*



**Can Happen Anywhere.**

**Take the Time to Prepare.**



**September is Massachusetts Emergency Preparedness Month.**

Governor Charlie Baker has proclaimed September 2018 to be Emergency Preparedness Month. The State 911 Department encourages all of our PSAPs and their personnel to think about and prepare for large scale emergencies that may occur.

The impact of recent events across the Commonwealth, and throughout the country, reminds us that disasters—whether natural, or as the result of human interaction—can happen anywhere. It is important for our agencies, our communities, our families, and each of us as individuals to understand the effects that these disasters can have on all areas of our lives. And most importantly, know to call 9-1-1 when they do!

In support of the efforts of the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA), and in recognition of Emergency Preparedness Month, please find some tips and resources on page 2. We encourage you to share them with your communities.

**Take the time to prepare.**  
**Make a plan before the next emergency happens.**

# Are You Ready?



**Stay informed about emergencies that can effect our area.**

## Power and Utility Emergencies

- Identify items in your home that relay on utilities, especially power-dependent appliances, equipment and medical devices;
- Have batteries, charging stations, and alternate power supplies, such as generators, ready to use.

## Severe Weather

- Pay attention to changing weather conditions which can become unsafe quickly and prepare to shelter immediately when warnings are received;
- Heavy rain, tree damage, flooding, brush fires, and tornadoes, are all possible from severe weather situations.

## Hurricanes and Winter Storms

- Both coastal areas and inland can be effected by widespread damage caused from high winds, heavy rain or snow, flooding caused by storms.
- Have plans in place to shelter in your home or evacuate if needed.

## Public Safety and Public Health

- Such events put the public's safety in question, which may require you to **shelter in place**.
- Water supply contaminations, health pandemics, as well as and biological, chemical, and radiological events can create health concerns.



## Emergency Alerts

The Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) program enables cell phones to receive alerts, based on the region you are located in at the time, for severe weather emergencies, imminent threats to life or property, AMBER alerts, and Presidential alerts. It is part of the Emergency Alert System.



## Emergency Kit

Create a kit with food, water and supplies to last at least 72 hours. The kit should include basic survival items, as well as unique needs of your family and pets.



## Emergency Plan

When creating a plan, you must consider the following:

- Evacuation routes and shelter needs;
- Communication plan, including **calling 9-1-1!**

Make sure everyone knows the plan and practices it regularly.

**For more information and resources, visit:**

[www.mass.gov/e911](http://www.mass.gov/e911)

[www.mass.gov/mema](http://www.mass.gov/mema)

[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

**Disaster Can Happen Anywhere. Take the Time to Prepare.**



# NEXT GENERATION 9-1-1



## RapidSOS Supplemental Locations

Be on the lookout! As Apple's iOS 12 was released mid-month, RapidSOS location supplemental location information will begin to appear for some of your wireless calls.

### ***What should I look for?***

The most noticeable change is on the **ResponseAssist** map. As a wireless call is answered that has RapidSOS location available, the Phase 1 and/or Phase 2 location data is displayed in the Incident Tile. In addition, a toggle button for the RapidSOS location, labeled "SDXY", also will be displayed.

When this toggle is clicked, the mapped location will adjust. Telecommunicators may notice a "circle within a circle". The outer probable location circle will represent the carrier location information, and the inner probable location circle, probably smaller, will represent the **RapidSOS supplement location** from the NG9-1-1 Clearinghouse.

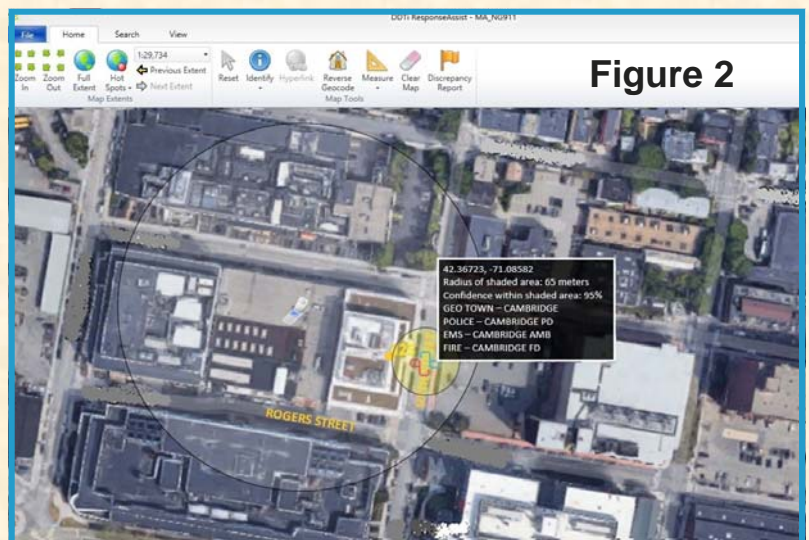
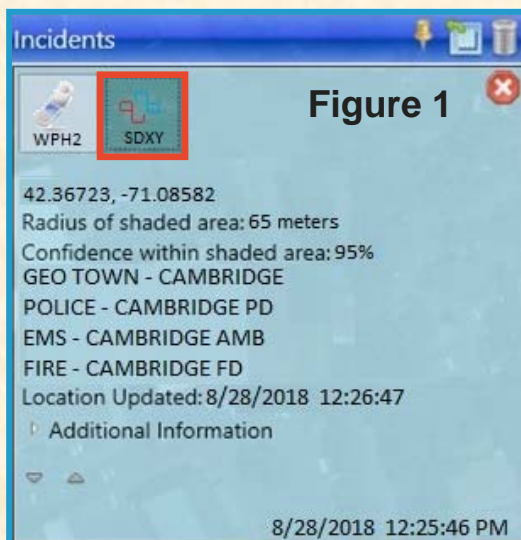


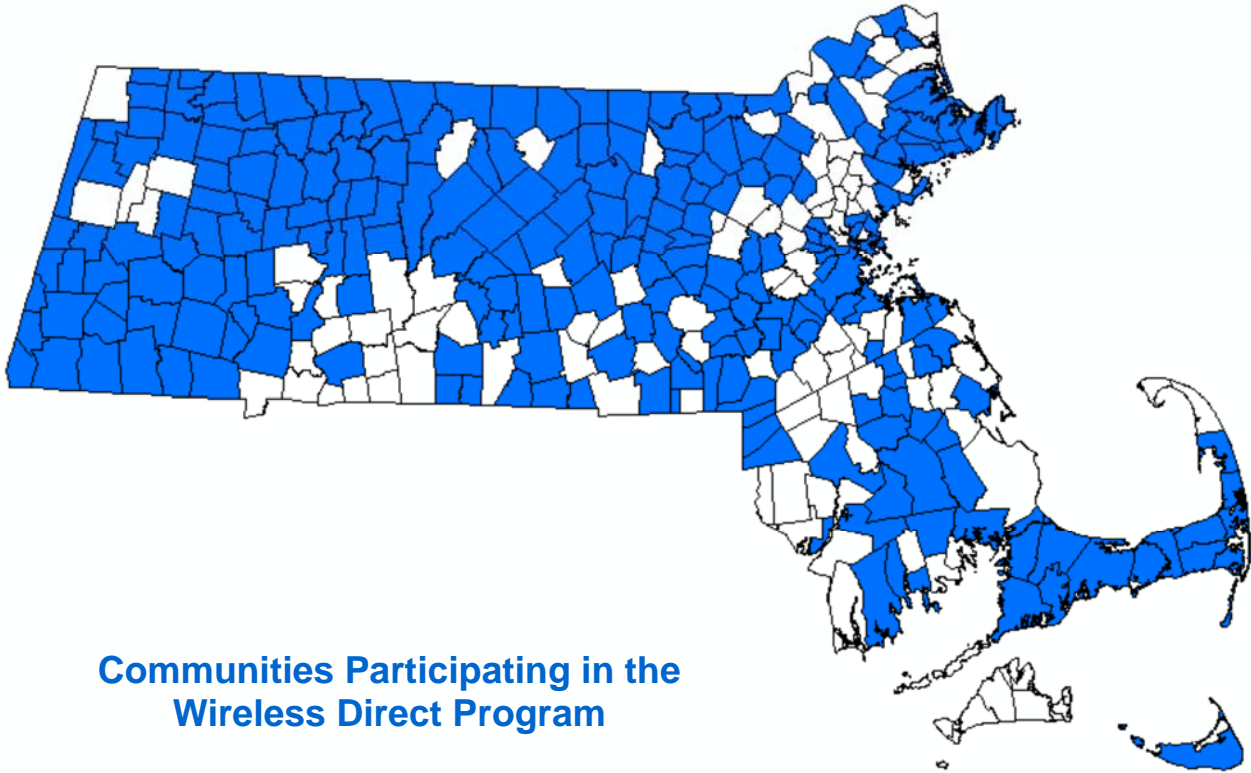
Figure 1 shows the Incident Tile, displaying two toggle buttons. Since the location icon labeled "SDXY" is selected, the map in Figure 2 is zoomed into the RapidSOS location.

If you have questions or concerns, please contact **Shahri Moin** at **508-821-7306** or email at [shahri.moin@mass.gov](mailto:shahri.moin@mass.gov).

## Updates from our Systems Division

### Wireless Direct Program

As of September 19, 2018, the Wireless Direct Program reached a new milestone, with 150 participating PSAPs. The areas shaded in **BLUE** on the map below represent the 201 communities now covered as part of the Wireless Direct Program.



**Communities Participating in the  
Wireless Direct Program**

The nineteen newest additions to the program in September are:

Agawam Police, Acushnet Police, Avon Police, Berkley Police, Braintree Police, Brockton Police, Dighton Police, Fall River Police, Lowell Police, Marion Police, Methuen Police, Needham Police, Salem Police, Salisbury Police, Scituate Police, Southwick Police, Swansea Police, Wellesley Police, and Weymouth Police.



If you would like more information on the program, please contact **Octavio Sousa** at 508-821-7206 or email at [octavio.sousa@mass.gov](mailto:octavio.sousa@mass.gov).

# Did You Know?

Recently, the State 911 Department was notified of a capability available from United State Postal Service (USPS) mail carrier devices— **they can call 9-1-1!**

This service allows USPS mail carriers to originate 9-1-1 calls from the package scanner devices they carry on their delivery routes.

The concept is to give the postal carriers a mechanism to reach emergency service if they did not have their cell phone with them. It is not an automated call to 9-1-1. The mail carrier has to initiate the call and the package scanners will use the cellular radios, GPS chips, and soft phone clients installed to allow them to communicate and provided a location.

The call will roam to the national carriers cellular networks. The device allows for full two-way audio conversation between the caller and the PSAP. A GPS location is also provided. In addition, the device can also be called back by a telecommunicator for up to 12 hours after a 9-1-1 call.



## Wireless Probable Location Areas

### *Do you know what the probable location circle is?*

It is the circle displayed around a geographical location (i.e., latitude and longitude) on the mapping application.

### *Do you know what the size of the circle means?*

The size of the circle surrounding the coordinates is in direct relation to the distance of uncertainty provided by the confidence factors at the time a calls is answered or a Retransmit is performed.



The radius of the shaded area is a confidence distance, which is in meters. The percentage of confidence indicates that there is a very good or very bad chance the caller is within the probable location circle. Please note that the percentage may not change very much when Retransmits are performed or from call to call, but the distance will.

So, the larger the uncertainty distance, the larger the circle; the smaller the uncertainty distance, the smaller the circle.

# SEPTEMBER



The State 911 Department is pleased to announce the recipients of the FY 2019 executive development and leadership scholarship program. The State 911 Department extends its congratulations to:

- ◆ Anthony Fowler, Holbrook Regional Communications;
- ◆ Anthony Gentile, Wilbraham Central Dispatch;
- ◆ Christine Gustafson, Westfield Public Safety Communications;
- ◆ Brian Kamp, Westwood Police; and
- ◆ Gregory Lynskey, South Worcester County Regional Communications



References to quotes/statement of works on invoices are not sufficient to allow for reconciliation of the invoices submitted for reimbursement. **DETAILED** invoices are required.

Submission of an “invoice entry proof list” does not satisfy the proof of payment requirement for reimbursements. Documentation submitted for proof of payment must at a minimum include payment number (check/EFT #), payment date, vendor name and amount.

FY 2019 reimbursement forms are available on our website at [www.mass.gov/e911](http://www.mass.gov/e911). Be sure to utilize the proper FY forms, complete all fields on the form and confirm all totals calculate correctly.

If you have questions, please contact **Karen Robitaille at 508-821-7221**  
or email at [karen.robitaille@mass.gov](mailto:karen.robitaille@mass.gov).

## Updates from our Training Division

### Text-to-9-1-1: What PSAP Personnel Need To Know

This month, informational sessions were held throughout the Commonwealth to discuss the deployment of Text-to-9-1-1 in the Commonwealth.

#### What You Need to Know:

- The Department expects that each PSAP in the Commonwealth will be receiving text messages directly within the next few months.
- Text-to-9-1-1 sessions will be delivered directly to all PSAPs based on the geographical data available when the text session is initiated.
- The Department has released a Call Handling Protocol for Text-to-9-1-1, which must be reviewed by all certified personnel.
- Additional training resources are available including a job aid on the call handling protocol, which includes use of the CallStation and ResponseAssist applications.
- An online tutorial will be available to every call taker in the Commonwealth after October 1, 2018. The link will be provided through various means to the PSAP Administrators and Managers for distribution to your staff.
- PSAP Administrators and Managers will be responsible for their staff's participation in the tutorial and training to become familiar with the texting technology.
- During the training phase, ring-all PSAPs will not have the ability to simulate text sessions for training purposes.
- ACD PSAPs will go through a Train-the-Trainer program, taught by Training Division staff, and will be provided the opportunity to train their personnel in-house. During the training phase, ACD PSAPs will be provided the ability to simulate text sessions for training purposes.
- A soft rollout of Text-to-9-1-1 is tentatively set for late November/early December. When this happens, Text-to-9-1-1 will be live and available in the Commonwealth.
- Once available, all PSAPs will be able to test the technology live within their own jurisdictions, allowing PSAPs to practice and simulate "test" text sessions to improve telecommunicator proficiency. We encourage this very much!
- A Public Education campaign announcing the availability of text-to-9-1-1 is planned for early 2019.

If you have questions about Text, please contact  
**Programs Director, Monna Wallace** by email at  
[monna.wallace@mass.gov](mailto:monna.wallace@mass.gov).



## Updates from our Training Division (continued)



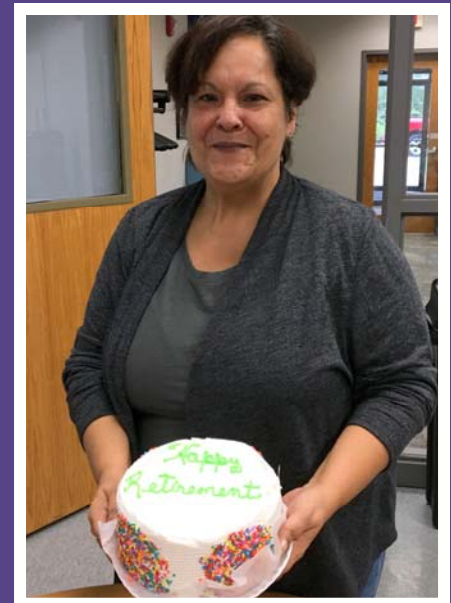
**The State 911 Department wishes to announce the retirement of Juanita “Jenny” Bracero this month.**

Jenny worked with the Statewide Emergency Telecommunications Board (SETB) and State 911 Department for eighteen years as a Training Specialist, teaching hundreds of 9-1-1 telecommunicators all they needed to know on all three of the Commonwealth’s Enhanced 911 systems—MAARS, VESTA and Next Generation 9-1-1.

Jenny joined the training team after leaving 9-1-1 communications in the State of Florida, and relocating to Massachusetts. Monna Wallace met Jenny shortly after as she began her career with the Westborough Police Department. Jenny’s passion for 9-1-1 and experience was evident, and Monna knew she would make a good fit within the training team.

Over the years, Jenny’s enthusiasm for the field was obvious to all who she spoke to. Her continued devotion toward this beloved profession was unmistakable to all that have attended her classes. It is easy to say that, through her teaching, Jenny has inspired many Massachusetts 9-1-1 telecommunicators.

From all of us at the State 911 Department and on behalf of all personnel in PSAPs throughout the Commonwealth, thank you for your service to our field. We wish you a very happy retirement. Enjoy!



### **47th Public Safety Communications Academy**

Applications are now being accepted for the PSCA being held

**October 15 to November 16, 2018,**

at the Middleboro Training Facility.

Please contact **Cathy Rodriguez** at **508-821-7217**

or email at [cathy.rodriquez@mass.gov](mailto:cathy.rodriquez@mass.gov).





## Updates from our Training Division (continued)

REMINDER

**State 911 Department Training Facility  
at  
Springfield Technical Community College (STCC)  
**CLOSED**  
Until Further Notice**

REMINDER

Please contact Programs Director, Monna Wallace at 508-821-7220 with questions.

## Updates from Mass EDP



Recently, Chris Murphy, Field Service Advisor (FSA) for Central Massachusetts, with the Massachusetts Equipment Distribution Program attended the Marlborough Low Vision Support Group.

Chris Murphy presented an overview of the Mass EDP program, reviewed the eligibility requirements and application process, and provided an hands-on demonstration of multiple pieces of adaptive telephone equipment available for the Low Vision Group. Chris did a great job fielding many questions, and had the opportunity to assist individuals with completing their applications onsite.

Mass EDP strives to reach as many individuals as possible through programs such as this throughout the Commonwealth. Field Service Advisors are available for on-site presentations at your local facility.

For more information and to obtain a complete list of specialized telephones available in the Mass EDP program, please call an EDP Representative at **1-800-300-5658**.



## Flashback: This Year in 9-1-1 2001

As the clock rolled from 1999 to the new millennium, the world of 9-1-1 communications was starting to change. The Statewide Emergency Telecommunications Board (SETB) continued to focus on ways to improve the 9-1-1 communications system across the Commonwealth. However, the changes being seen were not just with technology, but also the person behind the phone.

More and more Police and Fire Departments, who had traditionally used sworn personnel to take 9-1-1 calls and provide dispatch services, were looking outside of their own doors toward civilian personnel. The trend was leading to more civilian “calltakers” and “dispatchers” being hired to staff 9-1-1 PSAPs across Massachusetts than had been seen previously. With that trend came the need to provide 9-1-1 personnel more education and hands-on application training.

In 2001, the first ever **Public Safety Communications Academy (PSCA)** was held by the SETB. This newly created Academy was created in a similar design as the other Public Safety academies, except that it was for personnel whose primary focus was emergency communications.

In attendance at this first Academy were six students from the following departments: Amherst, Leominster, Wellesley and Wilmington. These students were certified in APCO’s Public Safety Telecommunicator course, and received detailed equipment and call handling training from 9-1-1 professionals. From the concepts of that Academy, the five weeks PSCA that is currently offered by the State 911 Department was born. **This October, the State 911 Department will host the 47th Academy class.**



### *FLASHBACK!*

Pictured here are the graduates of the 40th PSCA in November 2015.

Also pictured on the right are Executive Director Frank Pozniak, Director of Programs, Monna Wallace, and now Sheriff of Essex County, Kevin Coppinger. Pictured on the left are Training Specialists, Kevin Lewis and Jenny Bracero.

If you have a 9-1-1 related memory you would like to share as part of our celebration of 50 years of 9-1-1, please send it to **Monna Wallace** by email at [monna.wallace@mass.gov](mailto:monna.wallace@mass.gov).

