

Montgomery County Department of Public Safety Begins Study of County Fire Services

The Montgomery County Department of Public Safety is undertaking a project to help prepare for the fire service delivery system in the county over the next 20 years. This project will involve the direct input of Montgomery County volunteer and career emergency service representatives, as well as elected officials, municipal staff, and the public.

This strategic planning project's emphasis is to assure Montgomery County, as a whole, can provide emergency response capabilities in a professional, reliable, and cost effective fashion. It is the assumption that volunteers will be a viable force to accomplish this for the foreseeable future. Part of the assessment is to determine what is required to make this a reality. An outcome should include the expectations of what communities can achieve on their own, and what assistance or assets may be needed from outside agencies, such as the county.

Montgomery County has contracted with a firm to conduct this project to help analyze the current and future system needs and capabilities. Not only has the firm conducted similar assessment in Pennsylvania, but throughout the US. Their understanding of the fire service delivery models throughout our state and the country will enable us to measure ourselves against comparable delivery systems and enhance our effective performance while identifying areas we can improve on. In addition, the Insurance Services Office will be contacted to determine their perspective on global county-wide areas of improvement.

This also gives an opportunity to the general public to comment on the emergency services they seek over the next decade and beyond. The consulting team will utilize a combination of meetings to obtain input, questionnaires to each emergency response agency, a community survey, and various follow-up techniques to obtain information necessary to complete the project.

MCATO will also play a role in the process through communication of information to local communities and facilitating input opportunities to the consulting team. The project will begin in July, introducing the project to the various volunteer and paid fire officers in the county at their respective meetings this month. To help inventory assets available in the community each fire company will be requested to complete a questionnaire to start the process. Numerous meetings of interested parties will be conducted in the fall and this will be a topic at the fall MCATO meeting. **Each municipality is also asked to respond to the attached questionnaire.**

The Montgomery County Commissioners value the work of the volunteer and paid staffs that provide their excellent work throughout the county and take this opportunity to support the volunteer system, while determining need resources for the future, to ensure a timely and efficient response will occur when needed.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE SERVICES MUNICIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Municipality _____.

Person completing questionnaire

Name _____

Title _____

Email _____

Phone _____

Please return the completed form to by email or hard copy by Nov. 1 to:

Jerry Ozog, Education Training & Consulting Specialist

VFIS-ETC

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1. What should Montgomery County Department of Emergency Services be doing to help local communities and agencies? Why?

2. What should Montgomery County Department of Emergency Services stop doing for local communities and agencies? Why?

3. What is needed by Montgomery County Communities at the local level to assist in fire service delivery that Montgomery County Department of Emergency Services can provide?

4. What are the major issues facing the Fire/EMS services in Montgomery County and/or your community. What are the critical issues that should be addressed by the study?

5. What should Montgomery County Department of Emergency Services be doing to help local communities and agencies?

6. What should Montgomery County Department of Emergency Services stop doing for local communities and agencies?

- 7. What can be done differently by**
 - a. The Public Safety Training Center**
 - b. 911 emergency dispatch center**
 - c. Specialty Services (Hazardous Materials team, Technical Rescue)**
 - d. Emergency Management**

- 8. What other comments of recommendations do you have regarding the Montgomery County Department of Public Safety.**