National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week, April 8-14, 2012 by Lesli Prado SPSD

National Telecommunicator Week honors the first link in the chain of emergency



police, fire and medical responses. If you've ever been the victim of a crime, involved in a collision, reported a fire or needed medical help, you've called 9-1-1 and were helped by a Telecommunicator. Agencies across the nation are thanking and honoring their 9-1-1 call-takers and dispatchers for dedicating their time and energy to serving their communities. These public safety professionals are there for the American

public when needed most. They answer 9-1-1 calls and ensure that callers receive professional and timely assistance while quickly getting the help they need. At the Livermore Police Department they are officially known as Public Safety Dispatchers. Telecommunicators Week began in California in 1981, and quickly grew to national recognition. In 1990, Congress had designated the second full week of each April as a time to remember the critical role that dispatchers play in keeping us all safe.

The Livermore Police Department will honor their 18 Public Safety Dispatchers at the Alameda County Public Safety Dispatcher Banquet in Pleasanton on April 14, 2012. This year's recipient of the Dispatcher of the Year award will be given to PSD Renea Dawes. Renea has been a Public Safety Dispatcher with the Livermore Police Department for six years. She was recognized by her peers for her professionalism, customer service skills and dispatching abilities. Renea recalls her most prideful moment as a dispatcher when she handled a 9-1-1 call of a woman having a seizure and non-responsive while her small children were on the phone. Renea said, "I felt complete gratification knowing I was able to calm the children while determining the exact location of the mother, resulting in a life saving moment."



Livermore Police/Fire Dispatch duties include handling communications for all police, fire, and medical calls in Livermore, as well as fire and medical calls in Pleasanton.

The job of a Public Safety Dispatcher has evolved considerably over the last half-century. The early days where an officer or clerk might have simply answered the phone, relayed calls over a console radio, and kept a paper log have given way to a highly technical, multi-tasking environment that requires dispatchers to undergo extensive training and develop a strong skill set. Dispatchers are expected to handle whatever calls for help come in, whenever they come in... whether it's a major emergency or a minor problem. They do this while providing simultaneous information exchanges with field units and tracking everything using multiple computer systems.