



National Public Safety Telecommunicator Week April 13 to 19, 2014



National Public Safety Telecommunicator Week will be celebrated on April 13 - 19, 2014. The week honors those Telecommunicators that are the first link in the chain of emergency police, fire, and medical responses. If you have ever been the victim of a crime, involved in a collision, reported a fire or needed medical help, you have called 9-1-1 and were helped by a Telecommunicator, also known as a Public Safety Dispatcher. Agencies across the nation are honoring and thanking their 9-1-1 Dispatchers for their dedication and service to their communities. These public safety professionals are there for the public when needed most. They ensure that callers receive professional and timely assistance while quickly getting them the help they need. The appreciation week began in California in 1981, and quickly grew to national recognized event. In 1990, the United States Congress designated the second full week of each April as a time to remember the critical role that dispatchers play in keeping us and our communities safe.

On April 12, 2014, the Livermore Police Department will be honoring their 18 Public Safety Dispatchers at the Alameda County Public Safety Dispatcher Banquet in Pleasanton. **This year's recipient of the Dispatcher of the Year award will be given to PSD James Taylor.** James has been a Public Safety Dispatcher with the Livermore



Police Department for 17 years and previously with Alameda Police for 2 years. Prior to his dispatching career, he was a Military Police Officer for 10 years with the US Army. He served in Germany, South Korea and Virginia during his tenure. James is the proud father of a 22 year old daughter. He is recognized by his peers for his professionalism, customer service skills, and dispatching abilities.

James recalls his most prideful moment as a dispatcher when he received a 9-1-1 call from a person reporting a possible death. James kept the distraught caller on the line and helped coordinate the officer's response to the scene. Once the officers arrived, it was determined that the caller was in fact attempting to commit suicide. *"I think about this call often, as a reminder to always be empathetic, as you never know what's occurring on the other end of the line"*, said James.

The duties of a Public Safety Dispatcher have evolved considerably over the last half-century. The early days where an officer or clerk would simply answer the phone, relay calls over a console radio, and keep 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 every call they receive, whether it is a simple question, a minor problem, or a major life threatening emergency. Dispatchers are the unseen heroes, the voice on the other end of the phone or radio. They are always there to help protect and serve you and your community.