



# Voices behind 911 Communications

Third Issue  
Spring 2011

## City of Blue Island E-911 Communications Center

### Alarm System Updated

The 911 Communications Center has recently converted their current alarm system. A new digital radio signal system was installed by ADT. The state of the art system will improve the reliability of receiving alarm signals. The original analog system was due to be updated, since it was no longer capable of being supported by ADT. There was only one computer that was attached to the old alarm system in the 911 center. This made it difficult for more than one telecommunicator to operate the system. The new system includes remote computers at each of our dispatch consoles. New computer servers were also added to the equipment room that will replace the old outdated alarm panel. All of the 911 telecom-

municators received training prior to the installation. Several city buildings were also included in the upgrade to this new radio alarm system. Business that are required by ordinance to have their fire alarms connected to the 911 Center were encouraged to add the new radio alarm antennas to their current system. We look forward to adding this new technology throughout the community as businesses and homes upgrade their current alarm systems.

### 911 Facts

In 2010 There were **145,541** telephone calls that came into the Blue Island 9-1-1 Communications Center.

**74,000** emergency calls were dispatched.

**Nationwide 9-1-1 Call Volume:**

An estimated **240 million** calls are made to **9-1-1** in the U.S. each year.

According to the FCC, one-third are wireless calls! In many communities, **wireless calls** are one-half or more of all 9-1-1 calls.

### 911 Telecommunicators participate in the Community

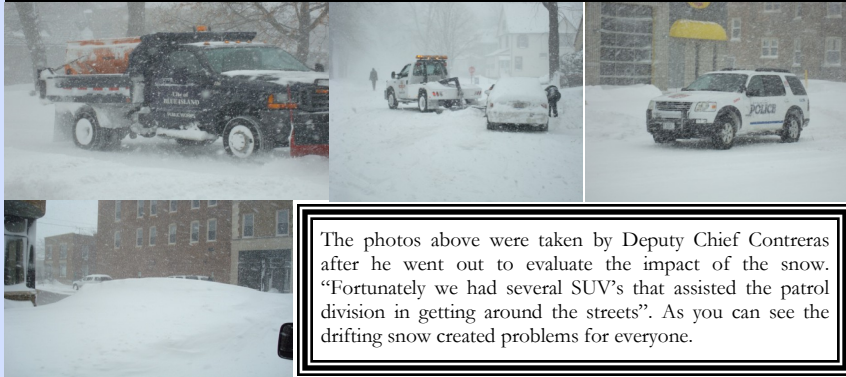


October 10, 2010, The 911 Communications Center was invited to participate in the Veterans Memorial School Health Expo. Telecommunicators Jim and Linda McGeever were available to pass out safety and 911 information to visitors. Jim and Linda said the visitors were very nice and asked a numerous of questions. The event was held in the gymnasium of the school . There were various agency's from the Blue Island area present.



The 911 Communications Center was very happy to offer information about 911 telephone calls to our residents. New 911 safety materials were purchased through Safety Education Alliance of America. This year (2011) the business community has been very generous and they have donated funds to the police department so that we can continue to offer the safety materials to children and families. The new materials should be available very soon. Visit [www.seaofa.com](http://www.seaofa.com) to see their excellent safety educational products.

## One of the worst Snow Storms in History!



The photos above were taken by Deputy Chief Contreras after he went out to evaluate the impact of the snow. "Fortunately we had several SUV's that assisted the patrol division in getting around the streets". As you can see the drifting snow created problems for everyone.

### The Illinois Text Messaging Ban

The new Illinois text messaging law goes into effect on January 1st, 2010.

According to the new law:

*"A person may not operate a motor vehicle on a roadway while using an electronic communication device to compose, send, or read an electronic message"*

**TELECOMMUNICATIONS WEEK**  
**APRIL 10-16**

We encourage All First Responders and Local Government Officials to remember to acknowledge you're Telecommunicators for the great job that they do everyday!

## Important Information That You Might Not Know

If you reside in the following communities and you dial 9-1-1 from your house telephone you will automatically be connected to the Blue Island 9-1-1 Communications Center. The residents of Blue Island, Posen, Midlothian, and the Village of Calumet Park currently have agreements with the City of Blue Island to provide 9-1-1 dispatch services. If you need emergency assistance from any of the above communities the 9-1-1 telecommunicator is specially trained to dispatch the correct department to your location. Remember, this is any 9-1-1 call from your house phone only!

Many of the above communities that we serve have chosen to close their police facilities after certain hours. In the event you call a non-emergency telephone number, when your police department is closed you will automatically be transferred to the Blue Island 9-1-1 communications center.

1. After hours, if you do not have an emergency the telecommunicator may place you on hold briefly, as they handle Emergency Calls First.
2. The telecommunicator will then ask you for your name and telephone number so, a police supervisor from your community can call you back and assist you with your police or community related questions.
3. Please be patient, listen carefully, and know what your community's non-emergency telephone number is.

## Let it snow-No More! 911 Telecommunicators rise to the task!

### On February 2nd, 2011

Between 8am and 4pm the average calls that were coming into the 911 Center averaged between **35 and 40 calls per hour**. On this date at 5pm the incoming calls peaked at **50** incoming calls in that hour.

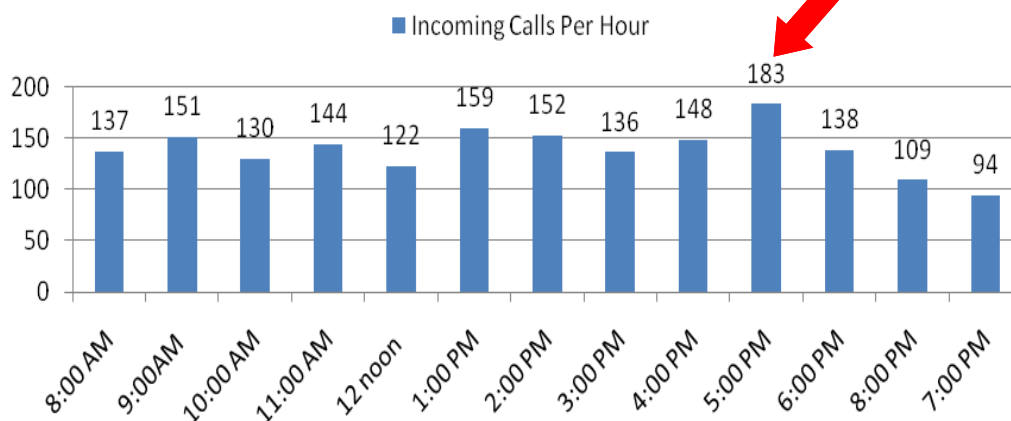
### On February 3rd, 2011

Beginning at 12 midnight the incoming calls were **78 calls in that hour**. The remainder of the early morning they slowly went down. However at 6am they began to rise starting with **71 incoming calls in that hour**. At 7am the calls incoming were rising to **106 in that hour**. If you look at the chart below you will see an hour by hour chart of the incoming calls. As you can see at **5pm** **the incoming call count peaked at 183 in that hour.**

After 9pm the incoming calls had leveled out to 70 calls in that hour.

We attempted to staff the center to accommodate the extra calls however we did not expect the amount of calls and other emergencies that occurred over those two days. Many of our T/C's were trapped in due to the snow. We stocked up on some cold cuts and bottled water. We even set up some cots. The officers working the street did the best that they could to work together with the telecommunicators under the circumstances. The snow storm did provide us with a chance to evaluate our emergency plans.

### Incoming Calls Per Hour



The number of incoming calls are tracked by the Motorola "Plant Vesta Pallas" 911 emergency telephone system. Reports of incoming and outgoing calls are tracked monthly by the 911 Director and are shared with the Blue Island 911 Emergency Telephone System Board.

**Senate Bill 72 titled "Vehicular Phone Use in School Zones". Effective January 1, 2010**

**According to the new law: "A person, regardless of age, may not use a wireless telephone at any time while operating a motor vehicle on a roadway in a school speed zone" .**

# Voices behind 911 Communications

## What you should do when you call 9-1-1?

April 1, 2011

Many different emotions are occurring when a person calls the 9-1-1 center depending on your emergency. First, make sure that your 9-1-1 call is an emergency. The 911-telecommunicator will usually answer the their phone stating, “9-1-1 Emergency” or “911 Where is Your Emergency”?

If you are calling from a cellular phone make sure you give the operator **your location**. The wireless telephone network sends your 9-1-1 call to the closest communications center. If you are calling from a cell phone you might have to wait to be transferred to the correct emergency communications center.

For example: you might be located in Blue Island, but the cellular tower sends you to the Alsip 9-1-1 Center. If you need the Blue Island Police/Fire or Emergency Medical Service, **knowing where you need services from helps the operator get you help faster!**

- Remain **calm** and give the telecommunicator your **location** and what services you need. (Police-Fire-Ambulance, etc.)
- **Stay on the line** and **listen carefully** to the questions the TC is asking. The answers you provide will assist us in getting you the services that you need.
- Most importantly, **remain calm and answer all the questions.**

### Tips for All 9-1-1 Users

Speak clearly and give the operator your address or location.

What services do you need or what are you reporting?

Listen carefully to the operators questions and don't hang up!

Call 911 back if you have to.

Teach your children how to dial 9-1-1 and what to say.

### What else can you do to help us help you?

Turn on your **porch light** at night or install a motion light in your yard!

Make sure you have your **address** on your **front porch** and your **garage!**

Know what your address is and your **neighbors address**. Keep these near

your telephone!

Start a **Neighborhood Watch Group** on your block!



## CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations Midlothian Police Chief Vince Schavone on your retirement. Above photo was taken at the Blue Island E-911 Communications Center Open House (2009). Chief Schavone attended the event and was instrumental in consolidating dispatching services with Blue Island.

We wish Chief Schavone much health and happiness during his retirement! First photo is Blue Island Mayor Donald E. Peloquin and City Attorney Peter Murphy.

Second photo is Deputy Chief Phil Contreras and Chief Schavone.

Visit us at [www.blueislandpolice.org](http://www.blueislandpolice.org)