

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

FIRE CHIEF'S GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER: 09-19

October 20, 2009

TO: All MCFRS Personnel

FROM: Fire Chief Richard Bowers



SUBJECT: Dispatch Changes – Pre-Alert for Full Assignments

Beginning **November 1, 2009**, the Emergency Communication Center (ECC) will modify the Pre-Alert for full assignments.

MCFRS continues to strive to reduce 911 call processing times at the ECC as a part of a larger effort to reduce response times overall. The ECC faces high pending to dispatch times on full assignments, and can save time by modifying the pre-alert for full assignments.

The pre-alert is a distinct, audible tone (Centracom Tone #3) intended to capture the attention of field providers, signaling them that a full assignment is about to be dispatched. Because the pre-alert is sounded before the event is actually dispatched, field providers have achieved noticeably shorter turnout times- dispatch to en route- for full assignments. Often, units begin responding before the event reaches their MDCs. However, the pre-alert consumes about 35-40 seconds of air time.

This modification of the pre-alert is intended to strike a balance between the need to rapidly alert field providers to a pending event, while significantly reducing 911 call processing times. As of November 1, 2009, ECC will no longer poll, nor will it announce to units on the air before the pre-alert. The new procedures are indicated below.

New Pre-Alert Procedures:

1. Centracom Tone #3
2. Tactical Talk-Group
3. Address (with cross-street)
4. Incident Type
5. Box Area

Example: [Centracom Tone #3] "Units Operate on 7-Charlie, 12345 Fake Lane, Cross Street Bogus Lane, House Fire, Box 34-01,"

Units and personnel who are alerted by tone pagers will not notice a change, as the actual dispatch occurs **after** the tone string has been activated. The standard full assignment dispatch will follow the pre-alert.

Also, to clarify the expectations for the vocal announcement on full assignments, the standard full assignment dispatch should contain the elements below.

Initial Vocal Announcement Full Assignments:

1. Centracom Tone #1
2. Tactical Talk-Group
3. Common place name, if available
4. Address (with apartment #/suite #/specific location in building)
5. Cross-street
6. Incident Type
7. Specific Incident Description - Structure type, occupant status, and other pertinent information
8. Box Area
9. Units due
10. Timestamp

Second Vocal Announcement:

(Will not be verbalized on Tactical Talk-Group if Command has been established)

1. Centracom Tone #1
2. Common place name, if available
3. Address (with apartment #/suite #/specific location in building)
4. Cross-street
5. Incident Type
6. Specific Incident Description - Structure type, occupant status, other pertinent information (additional information/changes in information)
7. Box Area
8. Units due (updated response order)
9. Timestamp

This FCGO modifies several sections of FRC Policy 22-03AM, **Communications Manual**, including: *Pre-Alert; Initial Vocal Announcement- Single/Multiple Unit Responses, Non-Full Assignments; Initial Vocal Announcement- Full Assignments; Second Vocal Announcement - All Dispatched Events; and Bidding on an Event.*

If you have questions, call ECC Battalion Chief John Kinsley at (240) 773-7101, or email john.kinsley@montgomerycountymd.gov.