

PEP Squad has Serious Message for Teens

The **9-1-1 PEP Squad** (People Educating People), Created in April 2010, consists of local teenagers from the ACOG region. They meet monthly and volunteer 4-8 hours each month to 9-1-1 education activities. Their primary goal has been to assist in public events and educate children on how and when to use 9-1-1.

Members of the PEP Squad recently elected to begin a new campaign educating other teens and young adults on the dangers of texting while driving. **AT&T** has a similar campaign **TXTNG & DRIVING ... IT CAN WAIT**, as well as a documentary called "The Last Text." 9-1-1 ACOG Board of Directors approved an agreement with AT&T for the 9-1-1 PEP Squad to utilize and show the documentary in public settings. 9-1-1 Education Coordinator **Lysa Baker-Kimbrough** says "along with sharing their message through this documentary, the 9-1-1 PEP Squad will also ask other teens and young adults to take a pledge against texting while driving." The group is still working on the presentation and materials, but will be sharing their message publically in the spring.



9-1-1 PEP Squad Members Sierra Watts and Kalynn Baker were the first two members of PEP Squad. Because of their leadership the group currently has 14 active

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Ray Kimbrough & Ryder Murdoch
2011 Dispatchers of the Year

National Telecommunicator Week Approaching

National Telecommunicator Week (NTW) is scheduled for the week of April 8-14, 2012. Each year 9-1-1 ACOG makes this week special by giving away prizes and having contests between the PSAPs.

Nominations will be accepted through March 15, 2012.

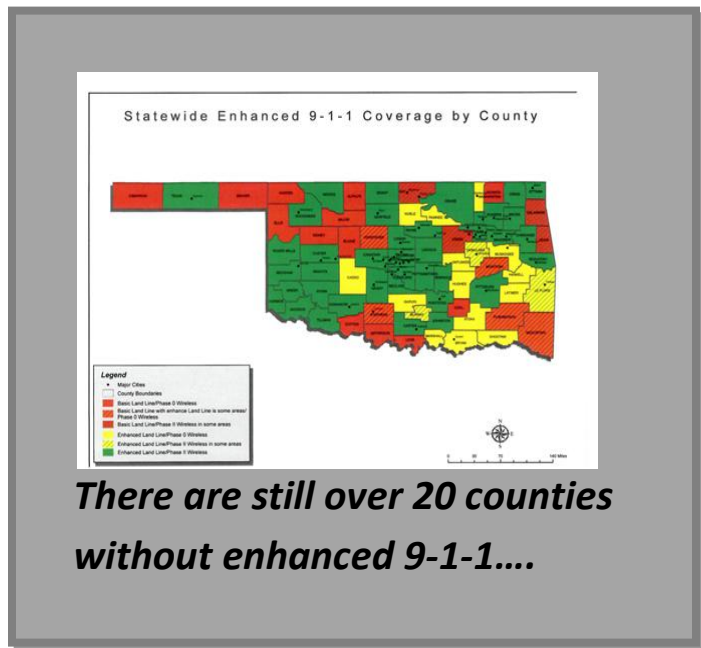
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STATE BOARD RECOMMENDS NEW 9-1-1 FEE

The **Oklahoma Statewide 9-1-1 Advisory Board** made recommendations to **Gov. Mary Fallin** and leadership of the **Oklahoma State Legislature** to establish a statewide fee to fund a state 9-1-1 coordinator position that has been vacant for years. The recommendations were a result of Senate Bill 175 sponsored by Sen. Patrick Anderson in the last legislative session. **Senate Bill 175** required the State Board to determine how to fund the state coordinator, what agency the coordinator should be located within, and further establish the duties of the coordinator.

The state 9-1-1 coordinator was created in 2005 with a statute that also created the Statewide 9-1-1 Advisory Board. 9-1-1 ACOG's **Steve Willoughby**, who serves as chairman of the Board, said "The position has never been filled because the legislature never obligated any funds for the position." **Gene Thaxton**, represents the Department of Public Safety on the Board and has served in the capacity on an interim basis because he also serves as the Governor's delegate for 9-1-1 issues to the FCC. "Every member of the board has a full-time job in addition to fulfilling their responsibilities to the Statewide 9-1-1 Board. This combined with no funding source, has hampered the board's ability to assist in implementing 9-1-1 statewide" said Willoughby. There are still over 20 counties without enhanced 9-1-1 and many more that do not have the ability to locate wireless 9-1-1 callers.

In its recommendations, the State Board recommends establishing a statewide fee, while leaving local 9-1-1 service fees in place. "Much more study needs to be done to determine the need statewide and thereby the amount the statewide fee should be" said Willoughby.



The recommendations suggest creation of an independent office, similar to the Office of Homeland Security that would receive direction from the State Board. In regards to the state coordinator's duties Willoughby said the need for the coordinator to assist communities must be balanced with the need to avoid creating an entity that would require unrealistic mandates on established 9-1-1 systems that are already working well. Willoughby added "In all of our recommendations we suggest continuing to look to the Statewide 9-1-1 Advisory Board for leadership."

The full report containing these recommendations can be found on the Statewide 9-1-1 Advisory Board's website: www.ok.gov/911 .

We Need You!
 Let us know what is happening in your area and we will add it in the next issue of Dispatch.
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PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

9-1-1 ACOG has initiated a comprehensive study reviewing current 9-1-1 operations and systems to assess the feasibility for self-managing Central Oklahoma’s Regional 9-1-1 System maintenance and network administration.

The project will assess current 9-1-1 maintenance and network administration operations, systems, and facilities as well as identifying enhancement options. As a result of the project, **GeoComm** will provide ACOG with options and recommendations for future system maintenance and network administration.

ACOG’s 9-1-1 Programs Manager, **Brent Hawkinson**, is excited to begin this important project. Hawkinson explains, “ACOG is charged with utilizing the maximum resources available for our emergency communications system. To that end we are constantly looking for the greatest economies of scale and efficiency of operations so we can continue to provide the best system for the citizens of central Oklahoma at the least cost.”

GeoComm was selected as ACOG’s partner through a competitive procurement process. According to **Greg Ballentine**, GeoComm’s Director of Consulting Services, there are numerous and complex issues involved in conducting this analysis. “Due to the extensive knowledge and experience of our consultants, GeoComm is uniquely qualified to serve as ACOG’s partner in this project,” said Ballentine.



Greg Ballentine
Director of Consulting Services



GeoComm has already sent surveys asking about service levels in December to the managers of the 20 answering points served by 9-1-1 ACOG. GeoComm will work closely with staff and the 9-1-1 Technical Committee’s Planning Work Group to establish benchmarks. **A special meeting of the 9-1-1 Technical Committee is scheduled for February 15th to discuss progress and present the Existing Conditions Report.**

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