



Inside This Issue

Membership Information	2
Silent Key	2
Cybersecurity Committee	3
Health & Wellness	5
Chapter Highlights	7
Teammates in Action	10
Upcoming Conferences	1
MCSC Committee	11



Membership Information

Member Type	06/1/2024	06/1/2025
Associate Members	1,919	1,766
Full Members	3,919	3,539
Full Group Members	9,765	10,060
Online Group Members	24,246	24,362
Commercial Members	397	389
Commercial Group Members	278	389
Student/Educator Members	12	32
Total Number of Members	40,536	40,537
Total Number of Group Agencies	1,687	1,707
Commercial Groups	59	49

Silent Key



We have learned that Donna Marie Bird of the Virginia Chapter passed away earlier this year.

For more information, her Silent Key can be found here: https://www.apcointl.org/psc/silent-key-donna-marie-bird/



Cybersecurity Committee



Cybersecurity for Emergency Communications Centers: Protecting Privacy
During Summer Vacation Social Media Sharing

As summer approaches, many individuals eagerly plan vacations, often sharing their excitement on social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and X. However, these posts can inadvertently expose personal information, creating vulnerabilities that cybercriminals could exploit. For those working in our Emergency Communications Centers (ECCs), where data security and information is closely guarded as a rule, educating the public about safe social media practices during vacations is critical to preventing cyber threats that could compromise personal safety and community security. Posting vacation plans or real-time updates on social media can signal to criminals that a home or business is unoccupied, increasing the risk of burglary or identity theft. For ECCs, managing emergency calls related to preventable crimes and safeguarding sensitive data shared through public networks. Cybercriminals often exploit location data from geotagged posts or public Wi-Fi connections at travel hubs, intercepting personal information to launch phishing attacks or steal identities. A 2024 article from Yale Cybersecurity emphasizes that posts like "I'm so excited about our two-week dream vacation to Morocco" can tip off thieves, making homes prime targets.

ECCs play a vital role in raising awareness about these risks. By promoting best practices, such as setting social media accounts to private, disabling GPS tracking, and delaying vacation posts until returning home, ECCs can reduce the likelihood of cyber-related emergencies. For instance, turning off location services on apps prevents geotagging, which can reveal a user's exact whereabouts. Additionally, using a virtual private network (VPN) on public Wi-Fi encrypts data, protecting against hackers who target unsecured networks at airports or cafes. These measures not only safeguard individuals but also reduce the strain on ECC resources, allowing dispatchers to focus on critical emergencies rather than preventable incidents like home invasions triggered by oversharing.

To integrate these protections into community outreach, ECCs can leverage social media themselves to disseminate cybersecurity tips. For example, there was a 2021 CISA campaign during Cybersecurity Awareness Month, where the hashtag #BeCyberSmart, as put out by the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA), can educate the public on safe online habits. ECCs should

Cybersecurity Committee (continued)

also encourage residents to report suspicious online activity, such as phishing attempts disguised as travel-related messages, which often spike during vacation seasons. By fostering a culture of vigilance, ECCs can enhance community resilience against cyber threats.

In conclusion, as vacation season tempts people to share their adventures online, ECCs must emphasize the importance of privacy and security on social media. By educating the public to avoid real-time vacation posts, secure their accounts, and use encrypted networks, ECCs can prevent cybercrime and protect community safety. Proactive outreach and collaboration with cybersecurity resources will ensure that residents enjoy their vacations without compromising their personal security or burdening emergency services.

Sources/Resources:

Yale Cybersecurity. (2025). Summer travel and social media. cybersecurity.yale.edu. https://cybersecurity.yale.edu/newsletter/summer2023/bee-safe-at-home

National Cybersecurity Alliance (2021, October 5) Be Cyber Smart, A Guide to Help Do Your Part https://www.staysafeonline.org/articles/be-cyber-smart-a-guide-to-help-you-do-your-part

Submitted by:

Kevin Lessard
Executive Director
Northern Middlesex RECC, Tewksbury MA



https://apco2025.org/

Health & Wellness

Tips for Summer – Staying Hydrated

It may seem obvious, but water is essential for our survival. However, do most of us drink the recommended amount? Unfortunately, many of us do not.

Instead, we often opt for coffee, energy drinks, soda, and alcohol. These beverages are diuretics, meaning they can dehydrate us by stripping our body of moisture as they are processed.

To compensate, our brain will take water from our internal organs and muscles, triggering a panic response and heightening the fight-or-flight reactions in our nervous system.

The general guideline is to drink 40-60% of your body weight in ounces of water each day. How well are you adhering to this recommendation?

Keep in mind, if you're feeling thirsty, you're already in a state of dehydration!

Does this mean you need to eliminate all your favorite non-water drinks? Not at all! You can simply supplement your intake by adding a bottle of water alongside your coffees, energy drinks, and sodas to counteract the dehydration they cause.

If you dislike the taste of plain water, you're in luck! There are countless ways to enhance its flavor, from using fruit infuser bottles to flavored water drops.

Incorporating water-rich foods like broccoli, cucumbers, and strawberries into your diet can also increase your hydration.

Craving a big glass of milk? It's an excellent hydrating beverage. If that's not appealing, consider sports drinks with electrolytes as another good option.

Do you struggle to remember to drink water or keep track of your daily intake? Hydration apps on your phone can provide reminders and track your consumption. There are also water bottles available with built-in alarms and trackers to assist you.

Whatever approach you take, prioritize hydration throughout the year – your body will appreciate it!

Submitted by: Shannon Polito Communications Dispatcher III

Santa Clara County 9-1-1 Communications

Health & Wellness (continued)





CPRA Chapter Highlights

Celebrating 90 Years of Service: The California Public Safety Radio Association's Legacy and Future

This year marks the 90th anniversary of the California Public Safety Radio Association (CPRA), a cornerstone organization serving Southern California's first responders through dedicated public safety communications. Founded on January 9, 1935, originally as the California Police Radio Association, CPRA has evolved over nine decades into a vibrant nonprofit consisting of over 600 dedicated public safety professionals from Police, Fire, EMS, 9-1-1, State and Local Government, Tribal, Military, Forestry, Highway, and Conservation agencies. These individuals willingly volunteer their time and expertise to enhance public safety communications.

Throughout its history, CPRA has continuously adapted to technological advances and the growing complexity of emergency communications. It now represents more than 250 public safety agencies serving over 23 million people, offering expertise, advocacy, and professional development to enhance public safety communications across Southern California.

The 90th anniversary celebration is a tribute to the volunteers who have selflessly contributed their time and expertise to improve the safety and effectiveness of public safety communications. CPRA is a fully volunteer-driven nonprofit, with no paid employees, relying on the dedication of current and retired public safety professionals who work tirelessly behind the scenes.

The May 15, 2025, meeting and luncheon at the Hughes Community Center in Claremont, CA, brought together members, including over 18 past Chapter presidents, to honor decades of service, share stories, and reflect on the critical role communications play in saving lives. The celebration underscores CPRA's mission to empower and educate public safety communications professionals, ensuring they remain equipped to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

As CPRA celebrates its 90th year, it also embraces a forward-looking vision aligned with the broader goals of public safety communications in California. The organization supports initiatives to modernize and integrate radio communications systems statewide, enhancing interoperability among agencies to ensure seamless coordination during emergencies.

CPRA's commitment to professional development, technical assistance, and advocacy remains strong, positioning the Chapter to continue as a leader in public safety communications. Its ongoing collaboration with state agencies and participation in strategic planning committees exemplify its dedication to advancing communication technologies that protect communities across California.

The California Public Safety Radio Association's 90-year journey is a testament to the power of volunteerism, innovation, and community. From its inception as a small group of law enforcement radio operators to its current role as a vital nonprofit serving millions, CPRA's legacy is built on the dedication of its members and their unwavering commitment to public safety.

As we celebrate this milestone, we honor the past while looking confidently to the future-continuing to strengthen the communications that keep California's first responders connected and communities safe.

Submitted By: Adriana Spirescu CPRA Chapter/Historical Committee Member

Virginia Chapter Highlights

The 2025 Spring NENA/APCO Conference took place May 20th through May 23rd in historic Williamsburg, Virginia. The conference was held at the beautiful Williamsburg Lodge. There were 243 registrations for the event with 228 in attendance.

The conference kicked off with the 2nd Annual NENA golf tournament held at the Kingsmill Resort Golf Course. The conference offered two pre-conference classes: The Team Leadership Approach and ENP Bootcamp . A welcome reception was hosted Wednesday night in the Virginia Foyer, complete with a friendly game of S.I.N.G.O.

The Williamsburg Fire Department's Honor Guard kicked off the conference by presenting the colors, while Susan Linnell sang a beautiful rendition of the National Anthem. The opening session included messages from members of the Virginia NENA Board, the Virginia APCO board, and VDEM. The opening session and keynote address was given by Brad Flanagan, Director of PSAP Ambassadors at Prepared 9-1-1.

Attendees were offered a variety of interesting and diverse sessions to choose from which included topics such as: Leadership, AI, Workplace Culture, QA/QI, Mental Health, and more! During lunch, Virginia APCO presented awards to the selected recipients of the 2024 Virginia APCO Telecommunications Awards. The Vendor Hall was open for attendees to learn about new technology and products throughout the day. After sessions, the night ended with a glow party complete with dancing, cornhole, and all things light up and glow-in-the-dark!

On Friday morning, the Virginia APCO and NENA board meetings were held. Virginia NENA installed their new officers and presented a Life Membership plaque to Bernard J. "Buster" Brown via virtual meeting. After lunch, the closing keynote address featured an inspiring message by Jim Schmidt, step-father of Gabby Petito and board member of the Gabby Petito Foundation. The conference concluded with afternoon sessions and, of course, raffle drawings for fabulous prizes!



Virginia Chapter Highlights (continued)











Submitted by: Krista Kilmon
Deputy 9-1-1 Director
Eastern Shore of Virginia 9-1-1 Communications

Teammates in Action

The Member Chapter Services Committee is pleased to announce our next recipients of the Teammates in Action Award.

On February 14, 2025, Telecommunicator's Bill Edge, Tricia McKnight, Caitlin Welch and Dariyea Leach of the Scotland County Emergency Communications Center in North Carolina fielded a 911 call for a motor vehicle accident involving a rollover with passengers possibly pinned. The team sprang into action and got the respective fire, rescue, law enforcement and EMS dispatched to the location of the accident.

Telecommunicator Caitlin had the foresight to contact the medical helicopter and have them on standby. This proved to be the right call when the first arriving unit immediately requested the aircraft to the scene. The severity of the accident escalated to the point where an additional fourth medical helicopter was requested.

Telecommunicator Bill played a vital role in communications. Throughout the incident Bill jumped channels, dispatched multiple units to different locations and ensured clear communication between all responders.

We also want to shine a light on Telecommunicators, Tricia, Caitlin, and Dariyea who worked tirelessly behind the scenes fielding calls, tracking units, posting updates, and keeping meticulous notes ensuring that all responders had the information they needed.

Please join us in congratulating Telecommunicators Bill Edge, Tricia McKnight, Caitlin Welch and Dariyea Leach, who went above and beyond, by presenting them the "Teammates in Action Award."

Thank you, Bill, Caitlin, Tricia, and Dariyea, for your unwavering dedication to service and for exemplifying what it means to be a true team. Thank you so much for your efforts.



Teammates in Action (continued)

At 01:28 hours, a routine vehicle check escalated into a critical officer emergency when an officer requested backup. Just 30 seconds later, the situation turned dire as the officer radioed "10-78" our agency's urgent code for *officer needing immediate assistance*. While checking on a potentially intoxicated driver, the officer was thrown from the suspect's vehicle, sustaining serious injuries when the driver attempted to flee.

What followed was a seamless, highly coordinated response that highlighted the professionalism, quick thinking, and unwavering dedication of the five Telecommunicators on duty that night, a shift that will not soon be forgotten.

Signe Thomas – PD Channel 1 Dispatcher & Telecommunicator in Charge

At the center of the storm was Signe, working our busiest law enforcement channel. She responded to the backup request within five seconds and, upon hearing the officer's distress call, initiated IREACH emergency tones in just seven seconds. Her dispatch was completed in an efficient twelve seconds, a clear, concise communication that ensured minimal airtime and maximum clarity.

Throughout the event, Signe maintained complete control of the channel: echoing officer updates, managing CAD notes, spawning a fire ticket for the injured officer, and maintaining situational awareness for all responding units. Her leadership, poise, and laser focus were nothing short of exemplary.

Alex DeMeritt - PD Channel 2 Dispatcher

As units from other jurisdictions joined the response, Alex expertly handled all other city traffic and provided ongoing updates to those also en route to assist. His coordination ensured that officers had the critical information they needed, without delay or confusion. His support helped relieve channel congestion and enabled PD1 to remain focused on the emergency at hand.

Shelley Parat - Fire Channel Backup & Call Taker

While David, our Fire Dispatcher, momentarily stepped away, **Shelley** jumped in without hesitation to dispatch the fire department. Around the same time, she also took a 911 call from a passerby reporting an officer yelling for help, a chilling confirmation of what was unfolding. Shelley quickly gathered all vital information, reassured the caller, and ensured that incoming units had the intelligence needed to stay safe. She also helped notify multiple outside agencies, a critical step that helped widen the net around the suspect.

Bailee Slone - Call Taker

Bailee worked behind the scenes with quiet strength and critical precision. She handled numerous agency notifications, passing along urgent officer requests and safety updates. One of

Teammates in Action (continued)

the departments she contacted later located the suspect vehicle, an outcome made possible by her attention to detail and follow-through during a chaotic and emotionally intense event.

David Nolan - Fire Dispatch

David, our Fire Channel dispatcher, returned to his post after the initial "10-78" and helped ensure that fire and EMS units had real-time updates as they entered the scene. David's swift response upon hearing emergency tones and his seamless handoff, reinforced the strong internal communication that Tri-Com is known for.

This call tested every aspect of our operation; coordination, communication, composure, and care. Each member of the midnight shift stepped up in their own way, showing just how vital our Telecommunicators are to officer and public safety.

To the entire Tri-Com midnight shift: your dedication, professionalism, and teamwork during this high-stakes incident reflect the very best of our field. You kept your heads when it mattered most and helped protect the lives of those who protect us every day.

Great job, team. Your actions made a difference and the Illinois Chapter is lucky to have you.





DAILY ACTIONS

BY HEADSET
HEROES.

WE'RE
WORKING TO
BRING THESE
MOMENTS TO
LIGHT AND
NEED YOUR
NOMINATIONS!

https://www.apcointl.org/membership/awards-recognition/teammates-in-action/

Upcoming Conferences



Upcoming Conferences (continued)



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To the wonderful 2024/25 Member and Chapter Services
Committee members led by our fearless leader LaToya Marz for another outstanding year of dedication and to this committee and association.

