

FAYETTE COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

FAYETTE COUNTY PUBLIC SERVICE BUILDING
24 EAST MAIN STREET, UNIONTOWN PA 15401
(724) 430-1277 – PHONE (724) 430-1281 – FAX
eoc@fcema.org

January 6, 2012

As we start the new year-

As many are aware, the FCC has a mandate requiring all transmitters operating below 512 MHz be narrow-banded by December 31, 2012. As part of that process, Fayette County 911 commenced initial testing of narrow-band operation on 155.190 from the Uniontown tower site with 8 departments that represent a cross section of pager tones and compatibility with non narrow-band Minitor 3's and 4's, along with Minitor 5's that have not been programmed to narrow-band operation.

This testing was successful.

Despite this success, Fayette County 911 would like to recommend that fire and EMS departments no longer continue investing in repairs or used equipment purchased of Minitor 3's and 4's. 911 would encourage you to instead use those funds to purchase replacement Minitor 5's or other pagers that are capable of narrow-band operation.

At this time, Fayette County 911 is in the process of scheduling (tentatively early April) a 7 day live test of narrowband operation of both tower sites for fire paging to allow departments to determine if any problems will be experienced with non narrow-band equipment.

At the conclusion of that 7 day live test, a decision will be made as to when final cutover to narrow band paging will occur. Remember this is a requirement by the FCC that Fayette 911 must comply with.

As an additional reminder, in 1998 when paging started on 155.190, a plan was started to stop paging on 33.70 MHz. Fayette 911 will attempt to keep 33.70 operational as long as possible. But paging may cease on 33.70 without notice based on availability of parts and antennas for the low band base stations.

Any questions, feel free to contact our office.

Sincerely,

Guy Napolillo, 911 Coordinator

FAYETTE COUNTY

EMA/911

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October 29, 2012

Fayette County 911, in preparation for our radio system upgrades, and in preparation to allow interoperable communications with our neighbors in Garrett County, MD, and Preston County, WV, find it necessary to shut down our low band (33.70 MHz) fire bases.

Official shutdown date for 33.70 MHz from the 911 Center is Tuesday, April 30, 2013.

At this point a failure of the antenna or antenna system at either tower on our 33.70 MHz bases will cause the plug to be pulled sooner.

This agency has been advising departments since 1998 to switch their pagers out to 155.190 MHz. If your department has not done so, you will need to remove your 33.70 MHz pagers from service and replace with pagers on 155.190 MHz prior to Tuesday, April 30, 2013

Secondly, as many of you are aware, the Fayette County Commissioners approved the purchase of the new APCO 25 trunking radio system from Motorola at the September 18, 2012 Commissioners meeting. Our agency is aware that many departments are trying to spend their money as wisely as possible when it comes to purchasing equipment. Should your department need to invest in communications equipment while the radio project is progressing, we encourage you to contact our office and speak with Tony Alviar talviar@fcema.org, Roy Shipley rshipley@fcema.org, or Guy Napolillo gnapolillo@fcema.org if you have any questions about what options you should be buying on the radios.

Purchasing a radio today that will work on both our current radio system and the new radio system does add quite a bit of money to a radio. We are encouraging departments to only purchase radios at this time if absolutely necessary so that costly options that won't be needed in a year or two are not bought.

Lastly, while there is other radio equipment that may be supported on the new radio system, each of the vendors equipment will go through an extensive testing and programming test procedure with Fayette County 911 to verify that our channel use/programming will be supported on the vendors radio, as well as to verify that operation of the radio is adequate for our departments/responders needs. This testing with other vendors will occur once the new system is operational.

Contact Tony, Guy, or myself if you or your members have any questions regarding the radios or new radio system.

Sincerely yours,

Roy Shipley, Jr, EMA Director