

# NEWS RELEASE

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Public Safety Telecommunicators Honored this week...**

**Natchitoches, LA., April 7, 2012** — Each year the second week of April is set aside to recognize the unsung heroes, who are our public safety telecommunicators. This week is a nationally recognized time of recognition for the incredible men and women, who answer our calls to 9-1-1, dispatch emergency responders, and provide support services to emergency public safety communications centers all across the nation. This week Public Safety Agencies nationwide recognize the pivotal role played by telecommunicators.

Public Safety Telecommunicators work long hours and their role as first responders to an emergency is often unrecognized. In 1981 Patricia Anderson of the Contra Costa County (Calif.) Sheriff's Office conceived the idea to recognize public safety telecommunicators for a week and was instrumental in launching the celebration of the first Public Safety Telecommunications Week. In the early 1990's the Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials (APCO) convinced Congress of the need for a formal proclamation. In 1991 Representative Edward J. Markey (D-Mass.) introduced what became H.J. Res 284 to create National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week. According to Congressional procedure, it was introduced twice more, in 1993 and again in 1994 and became permanent, without the need for yearly introduction.

According to Willis Carter, 9-1-1 Director for Natchitoches Parish, the Natchitoches Parish public safety Telecommunicators, who serve as the gateway to public safety services here in our parish, answered over 15,000 9-1-1 calls for help in 2011. "These professionals, who work in our nation's public safety dispatch centers as call takers, dispatchers, radio operators, radio and computer technicians, and supervisors, are truly "first responders" in times of emergency, whether it be fire, law enforcement, or an emergency medical emergency. More often they are our first contact, our first link to help when we need emergency assistance. This is a well-deserved week of recognition for them."

This year Public Safety Telecommunicator week will run from April 8 through April 14.

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### **About the Natchitoches Parish Communications District (Natchitoches 9-1-1)**

*Natchitoches Parish 9-1-1 is committed to providing fast, efficient and effective access to emergency public safety services for all the citizens and visitors to Natchitoches Parish. Since 1988 the "District" has served in a pivotal role ensuring the safety of residents and visitors to Natchitoches Parish by providing*

*the support services, which connects the citizens experiencing emergencies with emergency services via the use of one, easy to remember and simple to use 3-digit number, 9-1-1. The Natchitoches Parish 9-1-1 District provides the equipment and systems necessary to receive 9-1-1 calls from the nearly 40,000 residents of the parish, as well as the ever-increasing numbers of visitors to the area. We are proud to serve as "Natchitoches Parish's Gateway to Public Safety Services".*

Find out more at [www.natchitoches911.org](http://www.natchitoches911.org).

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