




# Berks County Department Of Emergency Services

## Memo

To: All Berks County Emergency Service Agencies and DES Affiliates  
From: Director Theodore R. Cole, Jr.   
CC: Berks County Board of Commissioners  
Carl Staples, C.O.O.  
Date: February 8, 2010  
Re: County Radio Problem

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As most of you are aware, the Berks County Department of Emergency Services 9-1-1 Center has been experiencing radio communications difficulties since Friday, February 8, 2010 at approximately 1:00 PM.

At issue is the primary microwave connection between the DES facility in Bern Township and the communications electronics in the County Courthouse.

While all of our radios are fully functional, the actual connection between the radios and the dispatcher radio consoles at DES has been compromised.

We have been experiencing random and intermittent radio console failures that could be best described as "rolling". The intermittent failures involve delaying responsiveness to dispatcher commands and the complete and sudden rebooting of individual radio consoles.

We have been working 24/7 with the county's radio maintenance vendor as well as our microwave contractors to identify and resolve the problem; however, at this time, they are unable to identify the problem.

We anticipate that within the next 48 to 72 hours, we will have an alternative connection between DES and the Courthouse established that will permit us to take the microwave off-line to troubleshoot and diagnose the problem.

In the interim, we have assigned staff to a backup location at Reading City Hall. This location permits us access to two fully functional radio consoles that our staff can utilize to assume radio dispatching in the event that we experience a catastrophic failure of our communications system.

We have also reached out to our emergency responder community to provide alternative contact information should it be necessary to access them by telephone.

Should it be necessary that we activate this emergency plan, all emergency responders should be aware that the 9-1-1 Center will be operating under the provisions of our Emergency Staffing Contingency Plan.

Please be assured that we are making every effort to resolve this issue as quickly as possible and we appreciate your patience and understanding during this difficult period.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly should you have any questions or concerns.