



Uniting Emergency Response: Fire and Police Combine Dispatch

by Gillian Sheerin

When you're in a crisis, every second matters! No one knows this better than Ridgefield's First Responders, who have been working closely with the Town on steps to improve the emergency response structure.

On April 25th, a combined Police and Fire central dispatch was rolled out. With this combination comes improved communication between departments, faster response times and better management of resources. Previously, 911 calls were answered by Police Dispatchers, then transferred to a dispatcher at the Fire Department for non-police related emergencies. With one central dispatch, the transfer step is eliminated. The trained dispatch team can directly notify each department. In addition, staffing and scheduling has become more efficient, network security has been tightened and the software has been updated.

This is the first step in Ridgefield's efforts to improve emergency response for first responders and people in crisis. The next project is a combined PD/FD Facility, which is currently in the design phase. It is anticipated to be presented to the public within the next 6 months. Be on the lookout for a Public Hearing notice! The project will ultimately need the approval from Ridgefield residents by vote at a referendum.

Stay tuned for more details as this exciting new project evolves!

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