

Idaho Falls Police Department

News Release

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Idaho Falls Police Department Celebrates National Public Safety Telecommunications Week

IDAHO FALLS – The essential work of the Idaho Falls and Bonneville 911 Center dispatchers often times goes unnoticed by the public as they work behind the scenes, but this week the spotlight is on them.

The Idaho Falls Police Department is saluting dispatchers as part of National Public Safety Telecommunications Week (April 10-16, 2011).

National Public Safety Telecommunications Week is geared toward raising awareness of the hard work and dedication of 911 calltakers, dispatchers and other telecommunications staff. These include the technicians that maintain radio and emergency phone systems, those that train communications staff and the supervisors and managers of communications centers across the country.

“(Idaho Falls and Bonneville County dispatchers) are put in a lot of difficult situations, but without fail they are committed to making sure the community is safe and that the responders are safe,” Dispatch Manager Heather Kunz said. “Most of the time that (work) goes unnoticed.”

The 911 center operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week without fail, Kunz said. The staff, which includes Kunz, an assistant administrator, four dispatch supervisors, and 18 full-time dispatchers; is highly trained and committed to providing high quality service to the community.

"They do a tough job and I'm pleased with the professionalism they bring to the community," IFPD Police Chief Steve Roos said.

National Public Safety Telecommunications Week was established by Patricia Anderson of the Contra Costa County (Calif.) Sheriff's Office in 1981 because telecommunicators provide a vital link to the public safety services on which Americans rely on every day.

"Public Safety telecommunicators perform the mission critical tasks behind the scenes supporting police, fire and emergency medical personnel on the street," said Bill Carrow, president of Association of Public Safety Officials International. "This week each year is a small way all Americans can share their gratitude for the telecommunicators who are just a phone call away in times of personal or national crisis. They are the true first of the first responders."

The Idaho Falls and Bonneville 911 Center will honor dispatchers this week with planned activities and recognitions, including a potluck dinner and the announcement of the "Dispatcher of the Year" award recipient.

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