Neptune City Office of Emergency Management

106 West Sylvania Ave, Neptune City, NJ 07753

Borough Council Meeting 8/26/2024

Horn/Siren-

- The Borough's emergency siren is utilized by both the Neptune City Fire Department for emergency dispatch as well as the Office of Emergency Management for weather and homeland security related emergency notifications. Any time the Fire Department, Office of Emergency Management, or ANSWER Team is dispatched for an emergency, the horn receives a signal for activation through the radio system. The horn does not rely on secondary platforms or any other software to function. This proves to be a reliant and immediate form of emergency dispatch.

- The horn has sustained power to be functional 24/7 but is restricted by a timer switch that only allows activation between the hours of 8 AM and 6 PM.

- There are two methods for the horn to be activated. The primary method is by the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office Dispatch Center. When a fire call is paged out over the radio system, a signal is sent to activate the horn. This is done remotely from the dispatch center in Freehold. The second method is to manually activate the horn from a secure location within the Borough.

- Surrounding towns that continue to rely on a town siren as a dispatch method include Bradley Beach, Ocean Grove, Avon by the Sea, Sea Girt, Spring Lake, Spring Lake Heights, Manasquan, Brielle, Point Pleasant Borough, Point Pleasant Beach, Howell Township, Brick Township, and Toms River.

- Municipalities that do not operate a town siren or horn have paid members on duty or duty crews on call to guarantee a response. Duty crews would still cost a fee to pay volunteers to be on call to guarantee a response. Towns that currently utilize duty crews include Neptune & Wall Township.

Dispatch Applications-

- The Neptune City Fire Department and Office of Emergency Management currently utilize two separate platforms for receiving emergency notifications and messages. These apps are "Chief 360" and "I am Responding". Both applications allow members to receive emergency dispatches through their smart phone or tablet devices. The software for these apps are integrated with the CAD (Computer Aided Dispatch) system in the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office. When an emergency call for the specific agency is entered into the computer system, a notification is sent to the specific agency subscribers. It is important to note that there may be a delay in these notifications as they are typically sent out after the call is dispatched over the radio system.

- These applications rely on the CAD being up and running to allow for notifications to be sent out. In the past two years, the Monmouth County Sheriff's Office Dispatch Center has had many interruptions in service. This includes routine updates, software failures, as well as global issues (i.e. the Microsoft outage). These software outages render these applications useless.

- When these applications are rendered useless, the only source of emergency dispatch is via radio/pager including the operation of the horn/siren.

- These application outages have led to significant delays in emergency notification resulting in further personal harm and property damage.

Dispatch Alternatives-

- Supply members with pagers that are capable of being on the digital radio system. These pagers retail at roughly $720.00 each. To supply each member of the Fire Department and Office of Emergency Management with a pager would cost the Borough over $30,000.

- Place members on duty crew to guarantee a response.

- Contract a paid service.

Fire Department Response Times (Average)-

- January- 3.3 minutes
- February- 3.0 minutes
- March- 3.9 minutes
- April- 2.8 minutes
- May- 3.75 minutes
- June- 3.0 minutes
- July- 4.1 minutes
- August- 4.2 minutes

177 Calls to date (8/26/2024) with an average response time of 3.5 minutes.