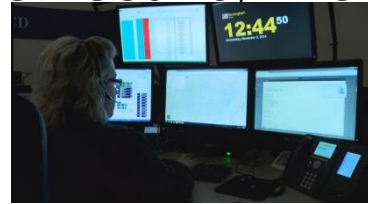




New 911 system to connect Jefferson County fire departments

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JEFFERSON COUNTY, AL (WBRC) -
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When you or a family member face an emergency, every second you wait for help can mean life or death.

Now every small fire department in Jefferson County will be connected through a brand new 911 system.

There are about 5,000 people who live in the Jefferson County community of Mt. Olive and all depend on their first responders in an emergency.

But the current dispatch system is old. It was the Fultondale dispatch center that helped firefighters find locations.

Mt. Olive Fire Chief Chip Cousins says the new system is “leaps and bounds above” what they've had. The fire department will begin using the new state-of-the-art computer system on Thursday.

“With the community, all the calls are going to go to one central location. At that location there is going to be so much technology there that can pin point, locate and verify addresses, in some emergencies, some people can't even remember their home address and they're standing right there,” Cousins said.

The computers, along with dispatchers, will improve efficiency and speed for first responders. Instead of a call being routed from the sheriff's office downtown, the new center is housed in part of the Center Point satellite courthouse.

“We'll have a consolidated center where that call stays here and we'll stay on the phone with that caller until everyone is on the scene, so that's a huge plus for Jefferson County citizens,” Steven Webb said.

One of the best parts of the new system is that it was paid for as part of residents' phone bills, about \$1 a month, so there are no new out-of-pocket costs for Jefferson County residents.

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