



Keeping pace

Loveland Emergency Communication Center dispatcher Erica Snyder, here with her array of computer monitors in the 9-1-1 call center, is approaching her 10th anniversary in emergency service.

9-1-1 call center dispatchers strive to meet growing region's needs

In the midst of a balmy Indian summer afternoon – sun shining, wind gusting – phones at the Loveland Emergency Communications Center lit up.

Calls flooded in to three emergency dispatchers working there, each call from a vehicle, each of those a car or truck on Interstate 25 just north of Colorado Highway 402.

Drivers punched in 25 calls to 9-1-1 in just under two minutes – that's one every five seconds –

to report a small but lively grass fire torching the shoulder of the highway and sending smoke across all lanes. Loveland Fire Rescue Authority was super-quick in responding, and efficient in containing the prairie fire that everyone passing by had seen.

'Everybody has one'

Loveland Police Department Communications Manager Mark Gaisford, in his office a couple of weeks later, ran the numbers and reflected on the incident. "Everybody has one of these now," he said, holding up his own cell phone, "and everyone in that vicinity used one."

The Communication Center, and LPD generally, is gearing up –

"tech-ing" up – to keep pace with our own handheld technology, with Northern Colorado's rapid growth and with the ensuing demands of a population that simply has more emergencies arise than at any time in the past.

Erica Snyder, who has been a dispatcher at the Com Center for just shy of 10 years, has watched it all unfold. A bank of seven computer monitors in two tiers wraps her workspace, supplying about all the light she needs to do her job. She once had two.

"My world has gotten bigger," she said as she fielded both emergency 911 calls and non-emergency calls to LPD one morning in late October. "A lot bigger."

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The Loveland Emergency Communication Center has an increasingly vast responsibility for handling and routing calls from people in need of help. While located and administered at LPD's East 10th Street headquarters, the center also serves as the single point of 9-1-1 contact for Loveland Fire Rescue Authority, Thompson Valley Emergency Medical Services, and the fast-growing Berthoud Fire Protection District.

Vast territory

Together, those agencies cover emergency response in a 256-square-mile territory in southern Larimer County where 270,000 people live.

A single internet-based network ties dispatchers to phones, radio communication, computers – their own and those aboard fire, police and medical response vehicles – digital maps, and data sources that emergency responders rely on.

“There’s practically nothing that can arise that they can’t handle with a keyboard stroke or a mouse click,” Gaisford said.

Call volume has climbed upward faster than regional population growth alone can account for, a reflection of the number of eyes, ears – and cell phones – within range of a visible emergency such as the I-25 grass fire.

Rising volume

During 2015, the 16 dispatchers who rotate through shifts at the communication center handled 40,329 9-1-1 calls, an increase of 16 percent over the 2014 number of about 34,000. This year, the center’s volume is on track for a similar increase and is likely to end with more than 46,000 calls.

During a single month – July 2015 – the center’s 9-1-1 call traffic peaked at 4,224 calls, or 136 per day.

And, those are just the emergency calls. The dispatch center also handles business and other non-emergency calls to LPD,



The Loveland Emergency Communication Center staff, from left, Communications Manager Mark Gaisford, Capt. Rob McDaniel, Kim Colwell, Caydee Swanner, Renee Clem, Kelly Pride, Clint Swain, Meghan Adent, Erin Berry, Laura Boots, Kristen Cummings, Julie Garcia, Tina Ochs, Jenn Sheffer, Rachel Bondy, Sara Williamson-Metzler, Becky Kamoske, Heidi Ryan, Bev Archuleta, Carmen Bloom, Erica Snyder.

and that number reached nearly 88,000 last year.

The strategy for keeping pace with the rising demand for emergency response involves a careful balance between people and technology, and technology, for the moment, is the focus for Gaisford and Capt. Rob McDaniel, who heads LPD’s Communications and Records divisions.

“I liken what we’re doing to what any consumer has to do with technology products they buy,” McDaniel said. “How often do we have to do software updates? How long before computer hardware has to be upgraded or replaced? A home computer might have a lifetime of four years or so. It’s no different for us.”

Records upgrade

The Loveland City Council has endorsed, on first reading of the City’s 2017 budget, a \$1.4 million upgrade of LPD’s records system, with its components closely aligned with the communication system.

The communication improvements are funded separately, mostly through a surcharge consumers

and businesses pay on telecommunication bills, and administered through the Larimer Emergency Telephone Authority (LETA).

Regional sharing

The proposed new Records Management System could dovetail with the Combined Regional Information Systems Project (CRISP), linking records data among most regional law enforcement agencies. Fort Collins Police Services, the Larimer County Sheriff’s Office and police departments in Timnath, Estes Park and at Colorado State University are members.

The data-sharing could become a new way that 9-1-1 dispatchers in Loveland can expand their offerings to the emergency responders they work with, and the population they serve.

“Everybody has all this data now,” Gaisford said. “It would be much better if it were available, on demand, in real time. Our people out there need to know. What has Fort Collins done with this individual? This address? This vehicle?”

New amendment to City code redefines the term 'abandoned vehicle'

On Oct. 11, an amendment to the City's Municipal Code redefining the term "abandoned vehicle" went into effect.

The new amendment defines the 'abandoned' as any motor vehicle "that is reasonably determined to be deserted, discarded or is inoperable."

The amendment continues, "Law enforcement shall consider the duration the vehicle has remained stationary, the existence of debris inside or outside of the vehicle, the structural integrity of the vehicle, the condition of the vehicle's tires, and any other fact that tends to show the vehicle is deserted, discarded, or inoperable."

Abandoned vehicles within this definition are those left on public property, including any portion of a street, highway, alley or other public right-of-way within the city limits.

Leniency for those in-compliance

The former code language defined an abandoned vehicle as any motor vehicle parked in the public right-of-way for a period longer than 72 hours. This included cars that were current on their registration, legally parked and operable, but deemed abandoned because they'd been parked without



As a result of the newly amended code pertaining to abandoned vehicles, police officers will now be able to focus on cars like this one that have truly been left for dead, and on other police duties.

moving for three days.

This short, 3-day time limit resulted in a much greater number of abandoned vehicle complaints to the Loveland Police since the Municipal Code was last amended in 2009, and many of the complaints were repeated reports relating to a single vehicle and situation.

Fewer disputes - fewer tickets

In 2015 alone, police received more than 1,400 abandoned vehicle complaints that required police time to follow up, investigate and in some cases, issue tickets.

The newly amended code is expected to reduce disputes between neighbors, reduce cost and hassle for car owners whose vehicles are otherwise in compliance, and make more efficient use of police employees' time.

The amendment also establishes a category of vehicles, including camper trailers, motor homes and others designed for sleeping or dwelling purposes.

Vehicles in this category cannot be parked in the public right of way for periods greater than 72 hours.

Makeover underway at Boyd Lake Avenue and Eisenhower Boulevard

The intersection of Boyd Lake Avenue and East Eisenhower Boulevard (U.S. Highway 34) in east Loveland was tabbed as one of the City's most troublesome in a citizen survey the Public Works Department conducted earlier this year.

A sweeping fix is underway, and will be for the remainder of 2016. Redesigning and rebuilding an intersection as busy as this one, while maintaining the movement of traffic throughout, requires careful scheduling and phasing. Once completed, motorists will find:

- Double, instead of single, left turn lanes on both westbound and eastbound Eisenhower, with double receiving lanes on north and south Boyd Lake to match.
- Islands on the intersection's north leg, tied to the acceleration and deceleration lanes on U.S. 34 to provide more efficient turning.
- Pedestrian safety improvements throughout, including refuge islands with push buttons, sidewalks and other upgrades, especially to aid student access to Mountain View High School.

- Signal upgrades that will change to accommodate the interim and final intersection function.

The \$1.95 million project is scheduled for completion before Dec. 31.



Happy Thanksgiving

City offices will be closed in observance of the Thanksgiving Day holiday, Thursday, Nov. 24 and Friday, Nov. 25.

For more information on City facility schedules go to www.cityofloveland.org.

Loveland Public Library Winter Reading Program Dec. 5 to Jan. 6

Kick-off the month-long reading program on Dec. 5 and enter a drawing to win two tickets to attend the Eagles "Cowbell Night" on Dec. 9. Slapshot, Eagles players and the Chicks will be there!



Loveland Public Library
Where you can!
962-2665, lovelandpubliclibrary.org



BIG BAND Holiday with CJRO

**Sunday, December 4
3 pm**

The Colorado Jazz Repertory Orchestra presents an exciting holiday concert featuring Denver's top jazz musicians!

Get tickets online: www.rialtotheatercenter.org



New Year, New You!

Chilson Winter Break Passes

ON SALE beginning November 25th

The Winter Break Pass is good for **UNLIMITED USE** of the Chilson Recreation Center from Dec 22, 2016 - Jan 8, 2017

Youth: \$17 • Adult: \$22
College Students: \$34 (3 wks)
(with Student ID) **\$44** (4 wks)

Call 970-962-2FUN for more information



700 E 4th Street, Loveland, CO
970-962-2FUN
www.CityofLoveland.org

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lovelandpubliclibrary.org/events
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LWP continues making permanent repairs in the Big Thompson Canyon

As work to reconstruct and relocate U.S. Hwy 34 in the Big Thompson Canyon picks up speed, line crews from Loveland Water and Power (LWP) are also busy relocating and permanently placing poles for overhead power lines.

Some of the poles that are now being moved were installed soon after the Flood of 2013 to restore power to about 400 canyon residents, but that was only a stop gap until permanent repairs could be made.

Poles line new highway

The new poles will be placed in accordance with the reconstruction and repair of the new highway and are expected to be able to better withstand greater amounts of snow, wind and ice loads than the old poles.

In early August line crews, with the help of various LWP work crews, set 11 poles by helicopter and three by truck along an area known as Horseshoe Curve. In September line crews transferred the overhead power lines from the

poles that were blocking highway construction to the new poles that were placed in August.

Once overhead wire was transferred to the new pole locations, line crews then focused on the Palisades Ridge - an area across from the now defunct Idywilde Dam.

While crews only needed to move six poles in this area, access due to the rugged and steep terrain proved challenging. With the poles moved and set, crews needed to pull electrical wire by hand, which is a slow and arduous process. Working in teams stationed along the ridge, crews successfully pulled the wire into place.

Work to continue

During the coming months this work will continue. The next work site, which was demolished by the flood leaving a 30 foot washout, will be along Moody Drive. Here another 15 poles will be relocated, again by helicopter, to their new



A helicopter lowers a 700-pound pole on the ridge near Viestenz-Smith Mountain Park. This process will be repeated many times over.

permanent locations. To get updates on this project and to view a video of helicopters setting poles in the canyon, go to Loveland Water and Power's Facebook page at www.Facebook.com/LovelandWaterandPower.



Lineman Justin Buxbaum holds steady on a crossarm approximately 40 feet off the ground as he strings and guides electrical wire from pole to pole along the ridge of the canyon.

Be alert to utility fraud

Phone scammers will often threaten to shut off utility customers' water and power and they can be very convincing.

LWP never calls customers asking for immediate payment with a cash card.

If you have received a suspicious call and suspect there may be fraudulent activity, call Utility Billing at 962-2111.



Energy tip of the month

Savings is great with 68!

For big savings without sacrificing comfort, remember 68°F is the perfect thermostat setting for when you're relaxing at home this winter. And if you want to save even more, you can lower it to 58°F when you're away or asleep. Find more winter savings tips at cityofloveland.org/energyreports.



Newly dedicated Rawhide Flats Solar facility is among Colorado's largest

One of the largest solar array projects in the state of Colorado recently began commercial operations.

The Rawhide Flats Solar facility owned by Platte River Power Authority, is putting 117,000 photo-voltaic panels to work.

Constructed on a 185-acre site at the Rawhide Energy Station in Wellington, the 30 Megawatt AC facility will generate enough electricity to meet the needs of 8,000 Colorado homes.

"This facility is a significant step in the continued diversification of our generation portfolio," said Jason Frisbie, Platte River general manager and CEO. "It reduces the risk of depending on any single source of fuel and increases

our renewable resources."

Platte River is the not-for-profit wholesale electricity generation and transmission provider for Estes Park, Fort Collins, Longmont and Loveland. Platte River partnered with juwi Inc.

who developed the project and served as its engineering, procurement and construction contractor. PSEG Solar Source now owns and maintains the solar panels on land leased from Platte



A ribbon-cutting to dedicate the new facility was held Sept. 29. Among the attendees were Loveland's Mayor Cecil Gutierrez (fourth from left) and Loveland City Manager Steve Adams (second from right).

River, who in turn purchases the power produced.

To learn more visit prpa.org/rawhide-flats-solar-project.

Avoid costly repairs by getting pipes ready for cold

When the temperature plummets and water freezes it can put extreme pressure on a home's pipes.

This pressure can lead to water leaks or dangerous pipe bursts, which could result in costly repairs for homeowners.

Fortunately, these issues can generally be prevented by following these five simple tips to keep pipes from freezing:

1. Direct warm air – Allow warm air to circulate around the plumbing, keeping doors and cabinets open. Often times pipes that freeze are located near an outside wall. Set the thermostat no lower than 55 degrees when you are away.

2. Prepare for quick temperature drops – Drain water from your sprinkler supply lines by following the manufacturer or installer directions.

3. Prepare outdoor spigots in advance – Turn off the water supply lines running to your outside spigots before the cold weather arrives. Once the water is shut off go outside and drain the

outside spigot. This will drain any remaining water. Remove and store hoses.

4. Turn on the tap – As a last resort, in extreme cold, let the water drip from faucets of pipes vulnerable to freezing. Even if the water in the pipes does freeze this will relieve some of the water pressure and may keep the pipe from bursting. However, if your home is unoccupied it is best to turn off the main water valve.

5. Prevention through insulation – Consider installing specific products made to insulate exposed water pipes such as pipe sleeves, heat cable, heat tape, fiberglass and foam. Keeping your water warmer will reduce the amount of energy needed to heat your water in winter months.



Help keep Fats, Oil & Grease out of your drain!

If poured down the drain or into your garbage disposal, F.O.G. will build up over time by sticking to your sewer.



- Scrape food waste into the trash
- Use a paper towels to wipe up excess oil
- Place waste oil and grease into a suitable container after it has cooled
- Avoid using the garbage disposal – keep a strainer near the sink to capture solids
- Recycle liquid oil and grease

Learn more at cityofloveland.org/Pretreatment