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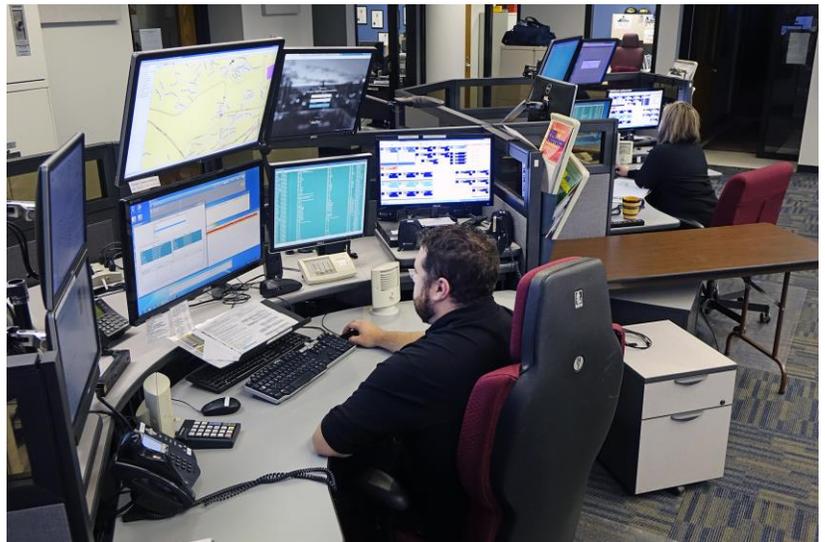
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**ST. CHARLES COUNTY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVES ACCREDITATION;
ONE OF ONLY 252 EVER ACCREDITED WORLDWIDE**

ST. CHARLES COUNTY, MO – The St. Charles County Department of Emergency Communications has been recognized as the world's 252nd Medical Accredited Center of Excellence (ACE) by the International Academies of Emergency Dispatch® (IAED™). St Charles County Emergency Communications is the County's 911 dispatch center, and is one of 21,209 worldwide, and one of 5,783 in the United States.

"This is an impressive accomplishment for St. Charles County," says Jeff Smith, Director of Emergency Communications. "To be part of this small group of centers -- just 252 ever to receive this designation worldwide -- is a great honor."

To receive accreditation, centers must meet the Twenty Points of Accreditation as prescribed by the IAED. Those 20 points include, among others, personnel training and certification, documented policies and procedures, quality assurance and improvement programs, robust dispatch review and oversight by steering committees, as well as having a medical director in place for the program.



St. Charles County began the accreditation process in 2015 by familiarizing themselves with the IAED criteria. After nearly three years of preparation, including learning protocols, training and gathering data, as well as achieving and maintaining highly accurate protocol use, an application packet for accreditation was submitted this past December. The IAED conducted a thorough review of the required documentation, including listening to actual calls, and made a site visit earlier this month to assess the dispatch center's processes.

"There's a tremendous amount of work that goes into achieving ACE status," says IAED President Jerry Overton. "We're certainly proud of St. Charles County's accomplishment."

While the accreditation for EMS is a big step, and one not many have undertaken, it is just the first step for St. Charles County and its Department of Emergency Communications. Smith says the goal is to achieve a Tri-ACE by becoming accredited in fire and law enforcement dispatch as well. There currently are only 180 active accredited centers in the world for emergency medical dispatch, 32 for fire and 13 for law enforcement. Only 15 centers in the world have ever met criteria for Tri-ACE accreditation.

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“My thanks to all involved in this accreditation process,” says County Executive Steve Ehlmann. “The hard work this department has done over the past three years means that we are providing the best possible care to citizens and visitors who call 911. Our protocols are consistent and among the best in the world.”

St. Charles County's Department of Emergency Communications handled 29,198 Fire and EMS calls to 911 in 2017.

The IAED is a nonprofit standard-setting organization promoting safe and effective emergency dispatch services worldwide. Comprising three allied Academies for medical, fire, and police dispatching, the IAED supports first responder-related research, unified protocol application, legislation for emergency call center regulation, and strengthening the emergency dispatch community through education, certification, and accreditation.

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About St. Charles County

Founded in 1812, St. Charles County is one of the fastest growing counties in Missouri, and the state's third largest county in both population and economic share. St. Charles County consistently ranks one of the healthiest places to live in Missouri in the County Health Rankings report published by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. It is home to 12 scenic county parks encompassing more than 2,800 acres with additional land under development and more in reserve for future development.

With a population of 385,840, St Charles County is home to large employers including General Motors, Citi, MasterCard Worldwide and Boeing. It is ranked among the top 25 counties in the nation in high-tech job growth by the Progressive Policy Institute and consistently has the lowest unemployment rate in the Metropolitan St. Louis area.

St. Charles County Government employs nearly 1,100 in more than 30 departments and offices, who work to make the county an excellent place to live, work and shop. For more information, please visit www.sccmo.org.