

The Official Newsletter of the TECB

Serving the *first, first* Responders



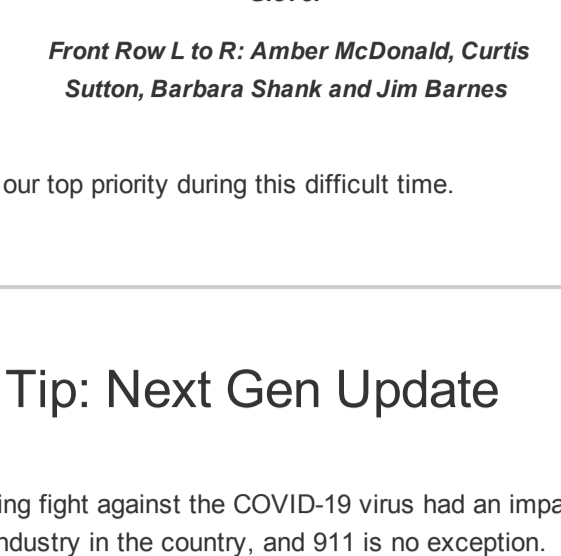
TECB Website

TECB Activities:

COVID-19

The TECB and staff would like to commend our *first, first* responders during this unprecedented time with the COVID-19 outbreak. Since telecommunications are unable to stay at home or work remotely, we would like to take this opportunity to thank our 911 professionals for continuing to save the lives of our citizens each and every day.

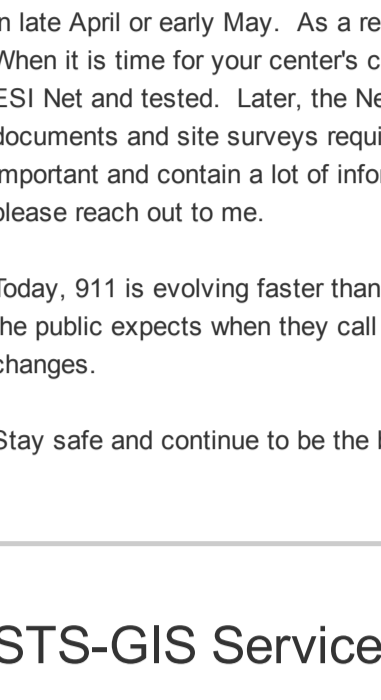
During this time, Governor Bill Lee has ordered state employees to work from home. You can still reach the TECB staff to help you with any of your needs and can contact us with any [clicking here](#). We will continue to make public safety and our 911 professionals our top priority during this difficult time.



TECB Staff

Back Row L to R: Vanessa Williams, Benjamin Peevyhouse, Eddie Burchell and Benjamin Glover

Front Row L to R: Amber McDonald, Curtis Sutton, Barbara Shank and Jim Barnes



**Director of Technology
Eddie Burchell**

Tech Tip: Next Gen Update

The on-going fight against the COVID-19 virus had an impact on every industry in the country, and 911 is no exception. The need for increased protection and "social distancing" will likely impact all our operations for some time to come. You have already seen that TECB staff is not traveling as of the date of this writing. I do not know when that will change, however, we are still available to assist if you have any questions or issues. This is a good opportunity to utilize technology to replace in-person visits. We can establish a Go-To-Meeting, Skype or Facetime session to facilitate discussions online and I am available by phone anytime.

The recent tornadoes in Middle Tennessee are but one of the hazards we face in the state, especially during spring. This is the perfect time to pull your COOP documents down and ensure all the information is current. If you need assistance with developing or exercising your COOP, please let me know.

As you are probably aware, cyber criminals are active during times of disaster and emergency. There have been reports of scamming, phishing and other malicious activity across the country. Physical and electronic security measures should be checked, and this is a good time to remind staff to be on the lookout for any unusual information requests at work or home.

The transition to the new AT&T ESI Net continues and I anticipate the first center coming online in late April or early May. As a reminder, new circuits are being installed for the AT&T ESI Net. When it is time for your center's call traffic to be moved, it will be routed from NetTN to AT&T ESI Net and tested. Later, the NetTN equipment and circuit(s) will be removed. The discovery documents and site surveys required to complete the transition to the new network are very important and contain a lot of information. If you need assistance completing those documents, please reach out to me.

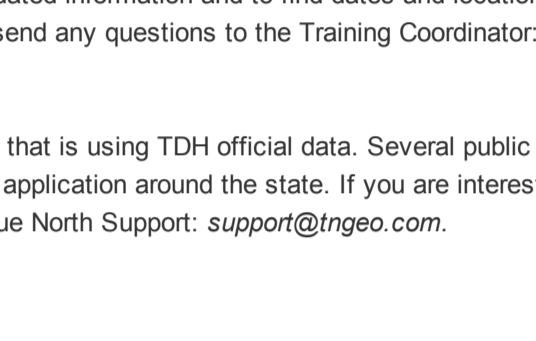
Today, 911 is evolving faster than ever before. New technologies impact operations and what the public expects when they call for help. Your TECB team is dedicated to assisting with the changes.

Stay safe and continue to be the best *first* first-responders!

STS-GIS Services

STS-GIS Services is continuing to offer map products and services at no cost to the ECDs through its contract with the TECB.

Did you know that wall maps are customizable? Wall maps do not have to be just over your county. Wall maps can be created for your area of concern, such as state parks, 4-H Camps, cities, towns, fire station response areas, etc. The driving analysis for both driving time and distance can also be added to your areas of concern. For an example, if you request a wall map for each of the fire stations within your county, the driving analysis can be added to each individual wall map.



Do you need GIS data? Go to <https://www.tn.gov/finance/sts-gis.html>, to see what's available.

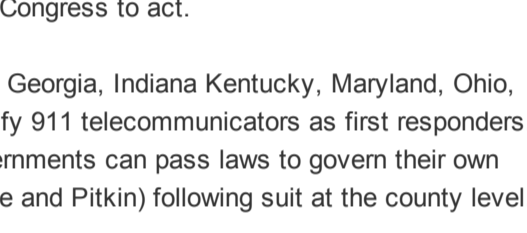
Free Google imagery is still available for ECD access; please contact your GIS Analyst for more details.

If you have any questions or would like to know more about its products and services, please contact Andrew Griswold (East) or Ryan Pittenger (West).

Andrew.Griswold@tn.gov
Regional GIS Analyst (East)
Office: 615-532-6519

Ryan.Pittenger@tn.gov
Regional GIS Analyst (West)
Office: 731-421-6819

GIS: True North



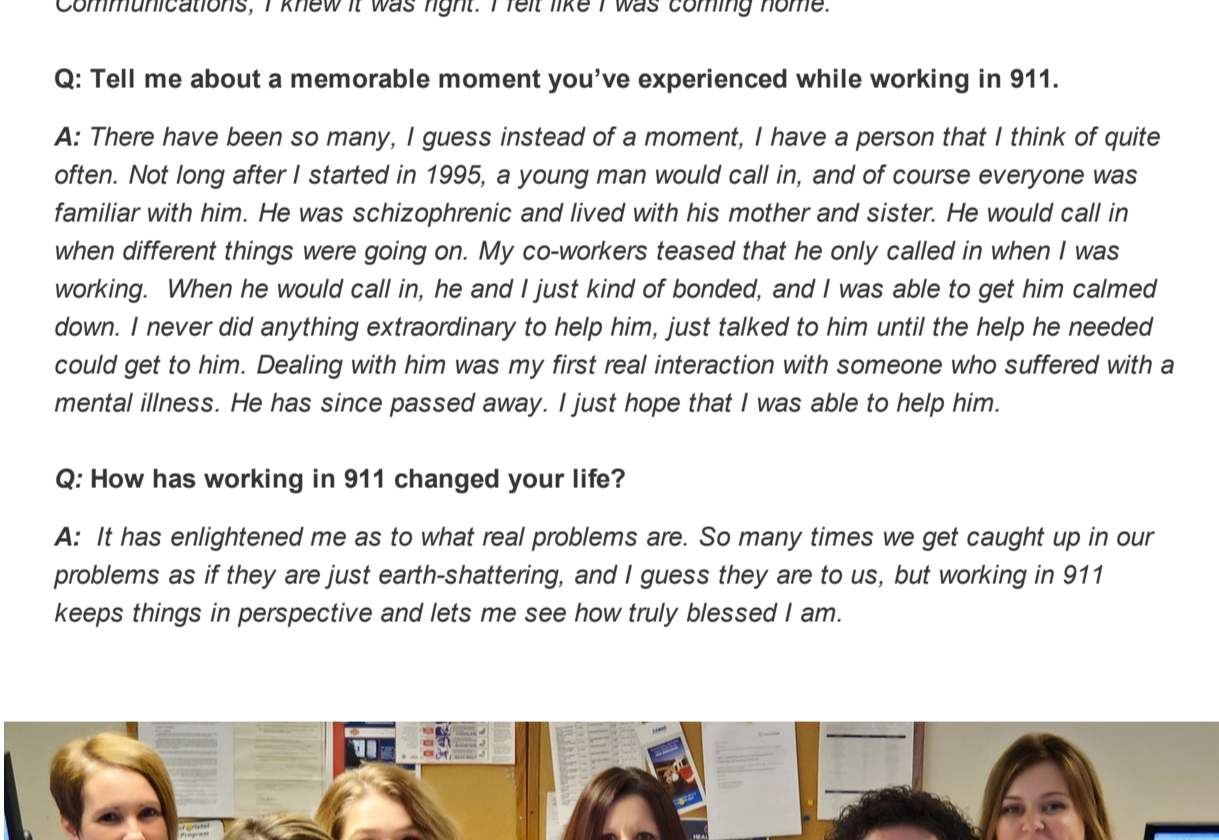
True North continues to be your authoritative source for implementation support and questions related to GIS for NG911 in our state. If you need assistance with any GIS-related issues, please send an e-mail to support@tngeo.com.

We need for everyone to please check that they are receiving report e-mails from us. If you are not, please send an e-mail to support@tngeo.com and let us know. It may be that our e-mail needs to be whitelisted on your side. If there is nothing to report for your district, you should still receive an e-mail stating so. There are also several districts with outstanding unique ID issues that need to be resolved. Please contact us if we can help with that.

The latest GIS Data Standards for NG911 document can be found [here](#). You will receive an e-mail notification when new versions are available for download.

True North also provides authorized training on standards and best practices across the state. Due to the current situation with COVID-19, all training is currently on hold, but please visit the training section of the TECB website to see updated information and to find dates and locations for upcoming courses near you. You may also send any questions to the Training Coordinator: Jamison.Peevyhouse@tn.gov.

True North has created a COVID-19 Dashboard that is using TDH official data. Several public safety agencies and 911 centers are using this application around the state. If you are interested in accessing this dashboard, please contact True North Support: support@tngeo.com.



Industry News

Some States Aren't Waiting for Federal Re-Classification of Telecommunicators to First Responders

In a terrifying or troubling moment, it is the calm, confident voice of a 911 telecommunicator who is entrusted to arrange the help needed in an emergency. 911 telecommunicators are unarguably a critical link between those in need and the fire, medical, or law enforcement services personnel arriving on scene to help. Beyond dispatching calls to first responders, 911 telecommunicators provide life-saving instruction, coping with extremely stressful life or death circumstances. This has a real emotional and physical impact, only worsened by the long hours and nonstop 24/7 nature of the job.

Despite that, 911 telecommunicators are currently classified by the Office of Management and Budget's Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) System as "Office and Administrative Support Occupations." This category also includes secretaries, office clerks, and taxicab dispatchers—professions with very different demands. As two bills moved through the House and Senate—called the 911 Supporting Accurate Views of Emergency Services (SAVES) Act—aimed at reclassifying 911 telecommunicators as protective services (like first responders), some states and jurisdictions aren't waiting for Congress to act.

To date, states including California, Tennessee, Georgia, Indiana Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, Texas and West Virginia are working to reclassify 911 telecommunicators as first responders. Colorado is a home rule state, where local governments can pass laws to govern their own jurisdictions, resulting in two counties (Arapahoe and Pitkin) following suit at the county level.

In Tennessee, the Senate reclassification bill, SB 2767 and House reclassification bill, HB 2304 are both scheduled to be heard next in the House State Committee and in the Senate State and Local Committee. However, the General Assembly has temporarily recessed until June 1, 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The bills are expected to be heard once the legislative session resumes. To view the bill's history and current status, [click here](#).

Reclassification would benefit 911 telecommunicators in a variety of ways:

1. Pays proper respect to the first, first responders, boosting morale
2. Provides access to additional benefits currently available to first responders like workers compensation, retirement and pension benefits, and access to mental health resources
3. Aids in retention as telecommunicators are appropriately recognized for their work.

References:
<https://thehill.com/blogs/congress-blog/politics/482657-congress-should-pass-bill-reclassifying-911-dispatchers>
<https://www.govtech.com/em/safety/911-Dispatchers-May-Be-Reclassified-in-Honor-of-their-Life-Saving-Work.html>

Local Light: Bristol 911

Bristol 911 Director Crystal Key spoke with the TECB's Amber McDonald about her experience and tenure in emergency communications.

Q: What do you find the most rewarding about working in public safety?

A: We have all heard someone answer this question with something like "I just like to help people," and that is part of it for me, but it's bigger than that. Whether it is making sure an ambulance gets where it is needed or making sure the officers have the information they need to stop a car, or assuring that the lady who has dementia and is confused stays where she is until her family can be contacted, I like to think that I have been able to make our community a better place. When people call 911 they should feel that we are not only there to help them, but have the trust in us to believe that we will take care of them.

Q: What do you find most challenging about the industry?

A: Technology. It is ever and quickly changing.

Q: What made you want to a career in public safety?

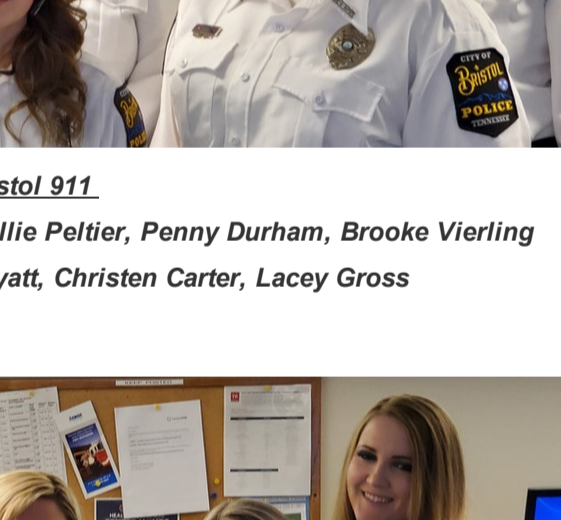
A: I didn't know that I wanted a career in public safety. I thought that I was going into the field of dentistry. I applied for a part-time dispatcher position and I have been with the City ever since. I have been in several different departments during my 24 years with the City, but when I left Communications some years ago, I had a huge void. I missed it. It's just one of those jobs that you either love or you hate, and I love it. So, when I had the opportunity to return to Communications, I knew it was right. I felt like I was coming home.

Q: Tell me about a memorable moment you've experienced while working in 911.

A: There have been so many, I guess instead of a moment, I have a person that I think of quite often. Not long after I started in 1995, a young man would call in, and of course everyone was familiar with him. He was schizophrenic and lived with his mother and sister. He would call in when different things were going on. My co-workers teased that he only called in when I was working. When he would call in, he and I just kind of bonded, and I was able to get him calmed down. I never did anything extraordinary to help him, just talked to him until the help he needed could get to him. Dealing with him was my first real interaction with someone who suffered with a mental illness. He has since passed away. I just hope that I was able to help him.

Q: How has working in 911 changed your life?

A: It has enlightened me as to what real problems are. So many times we get caught up in our problems as if they are just earth-shattering, and I guess they are to us, but working in 911 keeps things in perspective and lets me see how truly blessed I am.



L to R: Sargent Daniel Graham, Bristol 911 Director Crystal Key and Lieutenant Shaun Antonio



**L to R: Abigail Artrip, Jessica Donihe, Brittany Dye, Amber Curtis, Susan Olive
Not Pictured: Patty Hicks**

Legislative News and Meetings

In March, two 911 pieces of legislation passed in the General Assembly.

SB1958 / HB1933: As enacted, requires training curriculum for 911 operators and public safety dispatchers to include guidelines for T-CPR; provides immunity from civil liability for emergency communication districts, the state, counties, and municipalities for employees who provide assistance or instruction on T-CPR to a caller or bystander on an emergency call. To read more about the new law click [here](#).

SRJ0836: The Senate and House ratified the 911 surcharge rate raising it to \$1.50. To learn more about the resolution, click [here](#).

The General Assembly has temporarily recessed until June 1, 2020 due to the COVID-19 outbreak. The remaining bills that were not addressed prior to the recess are expected to be addressed after the legislature reconvenes.

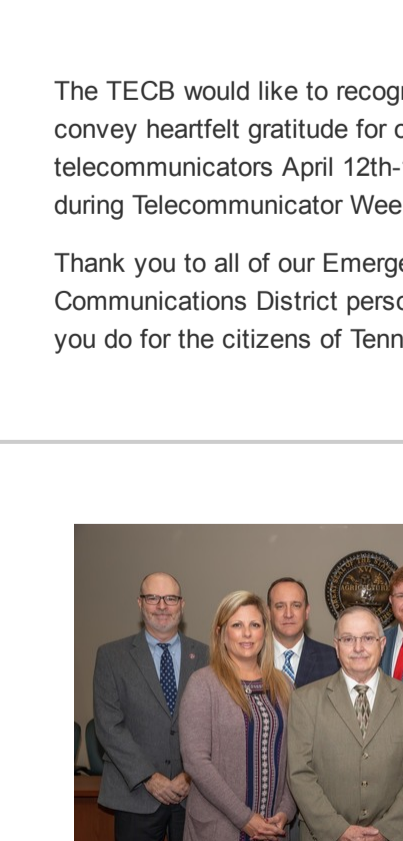
For more information visit: <http://www.legislature.state.tn.us/>



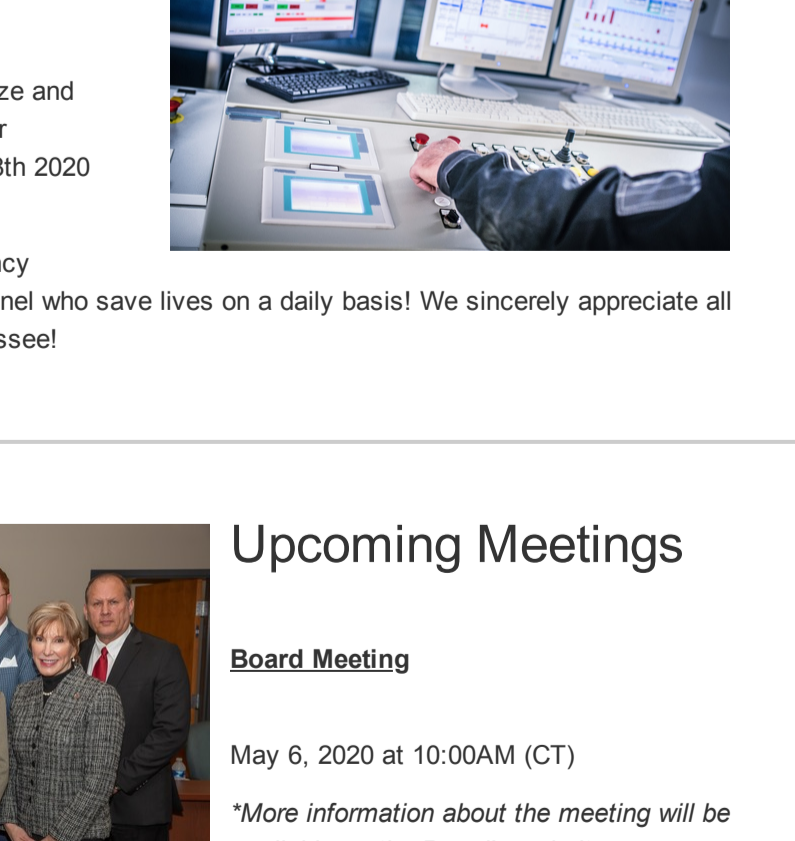
Director of Government and External Affairs Amber McDonald speaks to Representative Jim Coley about 911 in Tennessee

Last month the TECB's Amber McDonald met with [Representative Tom Leatherwood](#), [Representative Kevin Vaughn](#), and [Representative Jim Coley](#) from the Shelby County delegation to discuss the Board's function and responsibilities.

Thank you to each of the members who took time out of their busy schedules to learn more about the TECB.



TECB's Amber McDonald and Representative Kevin Vaughn

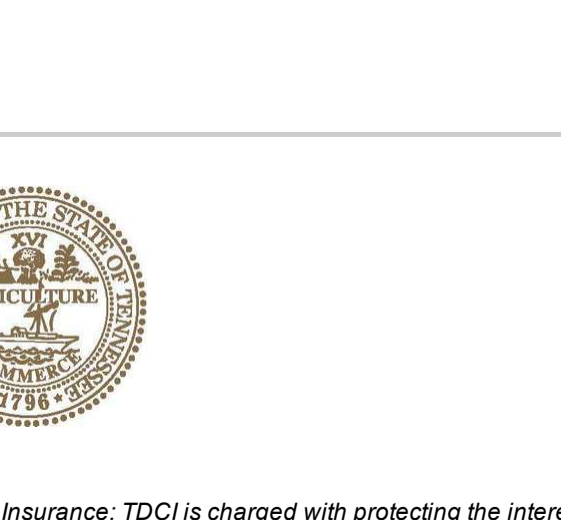


The TECB's Amber McDonald sits down to discuss the Board's initiatives with Representative Tom Leatherwood

Telecommunicator Week

The TECB would like to recognize and convey heartfelt gratitude for our telecommunicators April 12th-18th 2020 during Telecommunicator Week.

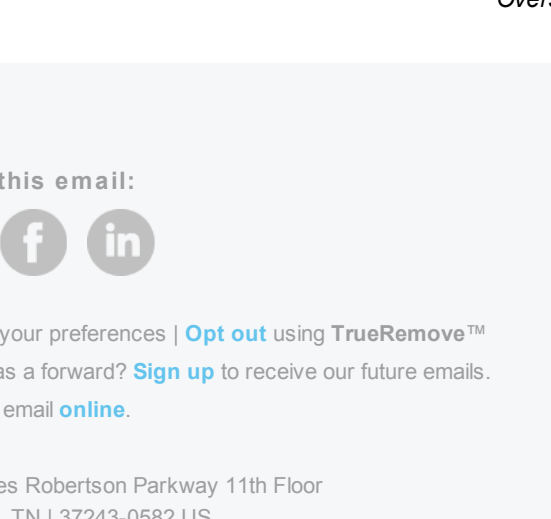
Thank you to all of our Emergency Communications District personnel who save lives on a daily basis! We sincerely appreciate all you do for the citizens of Tennessee!



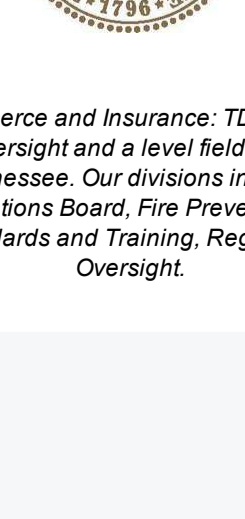
Upcoming Meetings

Board Meeting

May 6, 2020 at 10:00AM (CT)
**More information about the meeting will be available on the Board's website.*

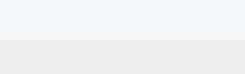


Tennessee Emergency Communications Board
Back Row L to R: Greg Cothran, Phillip Noel, Steve Martini, and Mark Archer
Front Row L to R: Jennifer White, Mike Hooks and Jill Holland. Missing from picture: Mayor Gary Davis and Dan Springer



About the Tennessee Department of Commerce and Insurance: TDCI is charged with protecting the interests of consumers while providing fair, efficient oversight and a level field of competition for a broad array of industries and professionals doing business in Tennessee. Our divisions include the Athletic Commission, Tennessee Corrections Institute, Emergency Communications Board, Fire Prevention, Insurance, Tennessee Law Enforcement Training Academy, Peace Officers Standards and Training, Regulatory Boards, Securities, and TennCare Oversight.

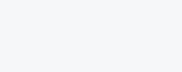
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