



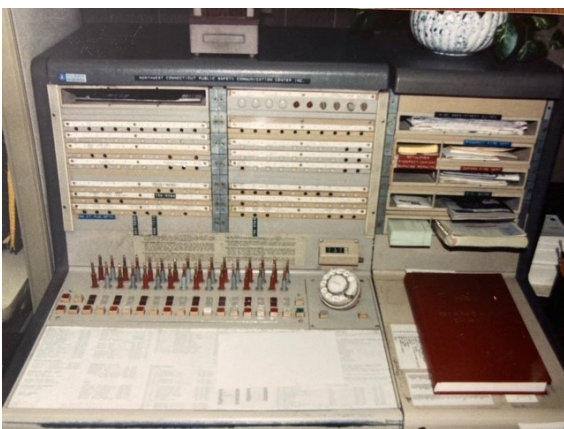
Service Spotlight—Northwest CMED

Northwest Connecticut Public Safety Communication Center Inc. has been serving the communication needs of first responders since 1975. Not familiar with them? Maybe you know them by one of their many other names like; CMED, Dispatch, Northwest, and so on. They are a non-profit, quasi-governmental organization funded by user communities, services and state revenue streams.



Above: Northwest Dispatcher Cathy Christie working at the center in the early 1980's. Below: The old style cord operated telephone system

In the beginning, Northwest occupied a very small back room at Waterbury Fire Department headquarters on Field Street. At that time, a lone dispatcher would field city medical 911 calls, connect ambulances to area hospitals and dispatch a few small town volunteer fire and EMS units. During the recession of the late 1970's, state and federal budget cuts put the center in peril and they were moved to Campion Ambulance Service on Pond Street. For more than a year, Campion adopted Northwest and help keep them afloat. "The kindness of Bill Campion Sr. kept it going during a very hard time", said Northwest's Executive Director Rob Retallick.



After budget woes subsided, Northwest's radio and phone consoles were moved to a more permanent home on the third floor of Waterbury City Hall. At that time, the center had some incremental growth and began dispatching a few additional smaller town fire and EMS units. Back then, small towns did not have access to the 911 system. Each town had its own seven digit telephone number for fire, police and EMS. The center had an old fashion cord operated PBX phone system.

1988 brought a statewide 911 system to the state. On July 1 of that year, 911 was available to every town in the state. Northwest received equipment from SNET and callers to 911 would be routed directly to the dispatch center responsible for their town. This was also the year that the center added a second dispatcher.

In 1992, Northwest moved from their city hall location to a newly constructed building on Cheshire Road in Prospect. They remained in that location until 2016, when the centers growth exploded. They moved to a leased space located on the campus of Saint Mary's Hospital.

2016 was the year that Northwest took on primary dispatch services for the City of Waterbury police, fire and EMS. It was around that time that the CMED center in New Haven folded and many of the services managed by that organization were transferred to Northwest. -CONTINUE ON PAGE 2-

NORTHWEST CONTINUED:



Today, Northwest employs dozens of highly trained and certified telecommunicators who field thousands of emergency calls each week.

They are the largest regional dispatch center in Connecticut. Despite their size, Northwest leadership remembers its humble beginnings. “This center has a legacy of dedicated service to the public and the first responders we have served for over 45 years”, said Retallick “We have a motto here; *‘Every Call Like Family’*. It means when that phone rings, the professional answering the call will offer the care and service they would want for their own family”.

Statistics:

Leadership: Rob Retallick, Executive Director

EMS Services Dispatched by Northwest: Bethlehem, Beacon Falls, Bethany, Middlebury, Oxford, Naugatuck, Roxbury, Ansonia, Derby, Wolcott, Woodbury, Valley EMS

Fire Services Dispatched By Northwest: Bethlehem, Bethany, Beacon Falls, Middlebury, Oxford, Roxbury, Ansonia, Derby, Woodbury, Waterbury.

Police Services Dispatched by Northwest: Waterbury, Middlebury

Hospitals Served by Northwest: Waterbury, Saint Mary’s, Danbury, Mid-State, Griffin, New Milford

Number of Calls Managed in 2020: 100,000 911 calls and 300,000 non-emergency administrative calls

Number of Employees: 60



EMS providers from around the region have been busy vaccinating the public over the past few months. From left; Brandon Priest from Oxford Ambulance, Braydon Alves from Beacon Hose/Waterbury HEALTH and Rob Haas from Heritage Village Security

