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DATE: October 19, 2009

REPORT TITLE: **9-1-1 AWARENESS WEEK**

FROM: R. Kent Gillespie, Commissioner of Employee and Business Services

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### RECOMMENDATION

That the week of December 7-11<sup>th</sup>, 2009, be proclaimed “9-1-1 Awareness Week” in the Region of Peel;

And further, that Emergency Communicators be commended for their dedication and commitment to public safety.

### REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- In 2008, Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) Emergency Communicators received **296,153** calls for assistance through the 9-1-1 emergency number service.
- The Regional 9-1-1 emergency number service represents a partnership among the Region of Peel, Peel Regional Police, the City of Mississauga, the City of Brampton, the Town of Caledon and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in providing emergency communications service to Peel residents.
- The 9-1-1 emergency number service employs approximately 242 Emergency Communicators; this number includes Police, Fire and Central Ambulance Communications Centres.
- 9-1-1 Awareness Week activities are planned from December 7-11<sup>th</sup>, 2009 in the Region of Peel to educate the public about the appropriate use of the 9-1-1 emergency system.
- The ***Paul Schram Memorial Award for the Emergency Communicator of the Year*** will be presented during Regional Council on December 10, 2009.

### DISCUSSION

#### 1. Background

Peel Regional 9-1-1 service was introduced in 1988. Since that time, millions of callers have obtained assistance from Police, Paramedics and Fire services. For the year of 2008, 296,153 calls for assistance were made to the 9-1-1 centre.

The Regional 9-1-1 service represents a partnership among the Region of Peel, Peel Regional Police, the City of Mississauga, the City of Brampton, the Town of Caledon and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in providing emergency communications to Peel residents through a dedicated telephone network. The 9-1-1 emergency network currently employs approximately 242 communicators and features full teletypewriter (TTY) service for

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hearing impaired callers. The service also has the capability of communicating in more than 140 different languages.

Despite the tremendous success of the service, only 45% of all 9-1-1 calls received at the Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) represent valid requests for emergency assistance. The other calls received are either erroneous calls, non emergency or prank calls. It is important to continue to educate residents about the appropriate use of 9-1-1, for serious medical emergencies, ongoing criminal activity, or a fire, in order to reduce the incidence of non-emergency calls.

It should be noted that there has been a 4.95% increase in the number of overall 9-1-1 calls received at the PSAP from 2007 to 2008. This increase can be attributed to Peel's increasing population and highlights the increasing need to educate the public on the proper use of 911. Lowering the number of non-emergency calls will ensure that emergency assistance continues to be received in a timely manner by those who are genuinely in need.

An alternative type of phone service, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), has recently gained much attention. Calls to 9-1-1 from VoIP phones that are non-fixed or nomadic, do not go directly to the 9-1-1 centre. The location information is not attached to the call so it gets routed to a call centre where there is an operator who routes the call to the appropriate 9-1-1 centre. If there is no voice contact, the location used is the address on file with the VoIP service provider. The public need to ensure that they provide updated address information to their VoIP provider and understand how 9-1-1 works if they have a VoIP phone. The Region is conducting education and outreach to Peel residents about 9-1-1 calls with VoIP phones.

## **2. Raising Public Awareness**

To assist in further educating Peel residents about the proper use of 9-1-1, the Region has developed and distributed educational material such as brochures, posters and fact sheets. Educational material is distributed to local hospitals, schools, Regional and municipal buildings, libraries and community centres.

Information will also be available on the Region of Peel Web Site, [www.region.peel.on.ca](http://www.region.peel.on.ca).

The Region continues to issue news releases to local media, invite media to events and work with community newspapers and television stations to foster awareness of how the 9-1-1 system works, and its intended use.

As part of 9-1-1 Awareness Week, the Region will present the Paul Schram Memorial Award for the Emergency Police, Fire and Ambulance Communicator of the Year at Regional Council on December 10, 2009. The Paul Schram Memorial Award is presented to Emergency Communicator's for displaying outstanding dedication, professionalism and achievement. The award is named in honour of the late Paul Schram, who was instrumental in the development of the 9-1-1 service in the Region of Peel.

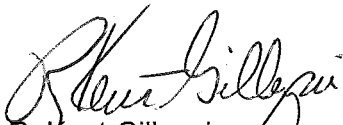
Following the award presentation at Regional Council on December 10, 2009, an Appreciation Reception will be held for the recipients of the Paul Schram Award and guests to thank them for their commitment to helping residents in Peel during emergency situations.

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**CONCLUSION**

The 9-1-1 emergency number service is an essential component of the emergency communication network in the Region of Peel. The continued success of the 9-1-1 service reflects the combined dedicated efforts of all the public safety communication professionals within the Region. Staff recommend that the week of December 7 - 11, 2009, be proclaimed "9-1-1 Awareness Week".



R. Kent Gillespie  
Commissioner of Employee  
and Business Services

**Approved for Submission:**



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D. Szwarc, Chief Administrative Officer

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c. Legislative Services

# Proclamation

9-1-1 AWARENESS WEEK

December 7-11, 2009

WHEREAS the 9-1-1 emergency number service is an essential component of our public safety system;

AND WHEREAS, the Region of Peel is continuing with the 9-1-1 Awareness Campaign to focus public attention on the proper use of the 9-1-1 emergency number; explain circumstances which warrant the use of 9-1-1; and communicate the importance of reducing the number of non-emergency and nuisance calls received by 9-1-1;

AND WHEREAS, calling 9-1-1 helps to ensure that the required emergency service is reached as quickly as possible;

AND WHEREAS, the residents of the Region of Peel should become aware of the proper use of the 9-1-1 service for emergencies;

AND WHEREAS, the hard work and dedication of emergency communications has made the 9-1-1 service the exemplary service the residents of the Region of Peel have indicated it to be;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the week of December 7-11, 2009 be proclaimed 9-1-1 Awareness Week in the Regional Municipality of Peel.



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Emil Kolb  
Regional Chair