

Cars alerting 911 of crashes nearing reality

By Sarah Rich, [Government Technology](http://www.governing.com), www.governing.com

Pilot projects are being planned to test technical standards that would allow vehicles to immediately “tell” 911 call centers when there is a crash.

The Association of Public-Safety Communications Officials International (APCO) announced Wednesday, July 18, the technical standards it wants deployed on a national level in the future. The standards would allow vehicles with in-car communication and security systems such as OnStar to directly send automatic crash notifications to a 911 call center.

“So literally the car can tell the 911 center, ‘Hey, I’m a car owned by so and so, I’ve been in a crash and it looks like it’s this severe,’” said Kathy McMahon, an APCO technical services manager.

Currently, “telematics service providers” like OnStar and Agero don’t send crash notification data directly from the car to 911 call centers, said McMahon. Instead, these companies act as a middleman, reporting a vehicle incident to 911 themselves. The companies are working to deploy the direct notification capability, however, and the technology is emerging.

APCO also wants the data that’s sent to be standardized. Private companies may send a variety of information and use different terminology of language when notifying 911 of an accident. APCO felt it necessary to develop a uniform data template to ensure consistency.

McMahon said, for example, that one provider might notify a 911 call center that a vehicle is the color red, but send the information spelling out the color R-E-D. A second provider might send a crash notification instead abbreviating it as “rd.”

With the new technical standards – called Vehicular Emergency Data Set (VEDS) – descriptions such as vehicle color, make, model and other details coming in to the 911 call centers would be required to be consistent in language.

“VEDS is a visionary document that demonstrates APCO’s commitment to get ahead of deployments in digital technology by identifying only those data elements that are important to multiple responders after a vehicle crash, said APCO President Gregg Riddle, in a statement. “The public safety community encourages the delivery of AACN (advanced automatic crash notification) information, whether it’s communicated verbally or via data, as an opportunity to enhance and accelerate emergency response to a vehicle crash.”

McMahon said uniform data can also help accurately determine the severity of injuries. With that information, first responders could send the right type of help, such as paramedics, to the scene of the accident. That data could then conceivably be sent to a nearby hospital so that trauma staff could be prepared to deal with serious injuries.

The pilots’ dates and locations have not yet been determined. The tests will focus on sending data to the 911 call centers, and then sending that data to hospitals and emergency rooms to identify trauma victims. The intent is to save lives.

McMahon said APCO wants to test the new technical standards before launching them nationwide so that the association could make any needed adjustments.

News and Notes

- ⇒ Please remember ::: the Highway Department will be shut down for Fair Week. The dates for the shut down are August 13th through the 17th. Please see a foreman for any questions.
- ⇒ Gary, Jeff, and Rick are moving into their new offices. The small gray trailer unit will be returned to the company in the upcoming days. At this time, a definite usage for the new open space has not been decided upon. Once the old trailer is removed, more information will become available.
- ⇒ Keep up the good work on the diaries. It has been very helpful with office staff preparing numbers for storm damage assessments. A meeting with FEMA on August 1st will shed more light regarding reimbursements for labor and equipment, as well as some materials used while cleaning up after the late June storm.
- ⇒ With hot weather still present this summer, here are a few tips for hydration :::
 1. Despite the old adage, “**if you’re thirsty, you’re already too late - you’re already dehydrated,**” experts say this is NOT true. It has been shown that neither your performance nor health is negatively impacted from this state of slight dehydration. The new rule is to drink when you’re thirsty.
 2. **You can never drink too much water** is also a myth. Studies have shown that runners in a high-rate trial who were given large amounts of water suffered severe stomach distress and couldn’t finish their workout.
 3. **Try to avoid drinking enough to make up for what you lost while sweating.** Don’t drink a gallon if you think you lost a gallon. Instead, respond right away to keep the thirst at bay. A few sips of water or sports drink (which replaces fluid, sodium, and electrolytes) every 10 to 12 minutes is enough to stay hydrated while avoiding stomach issues.
 4. **Instead of avoiding protein altogether,** a small amount of protein actually helps fluid absorption and retention. However, the key word is “small amount of protein”. Just five grams of protein per 12 ounces is the target, as this aides in rehydration, muscle repair, and endurance increase.

Happy Birthday to...

Dan Bohn	7-10
Jason Hatfield	7-6
Dante Jacolenne	7-26
Andy Swinehart	7-27

Happy Anniversary to...

Dan Bohn	13 years
Jarret Daniels	8 years
Scotty Staker	2 years