

# News

Macomb County  
Office of Public Affairs



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Contact: Phil Frame  
Office of Public Affairs  
586-469-7239  
[phil.frame@macombcountymi.gov](mailto:phil.frame@macombcountymi.gov)

## **Macomb County unveils 800 MHz communication system**

MOUNT CLEMENS, Mich. – It's the crucial moment of a hostage standoff as SWAT team members storm a building. Once inside, the situation changes and the team needs to contact superiors outside, but are unable to because of bad radio reception.

This problem, made evident during a series of school hostage and terrorist attack practice scenarios over the past two years, is just one of many that the debut of the county's new 800 MHz digital-trunked communication system aims to solve.

"This is one of the most significant tools we have to provide for the public's safety," said County Board Chair Nancy White. "I am proud of the fact that the board can bring all communities together to make this a safer place to live and work."

According to Macomb County Sheriff Mark Hackel, the new system is going to make difficult emergency situations much more manageable.

"It will allow easy and clear communication between dispatch and first responders, and between multiple agencies," said Hackel. "From a public safety standpoint, this is a huge step forward."

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In addition to fixing reception issues inside buildings and the hilly areas in northern Macomb County, the new system will allow agencies from multiple municipalities to easily communicate with each other. Police, Fire and EMS in Macomb County will be able to communicate with any agency in the state.

Local municipalities already integrated into the new communication system include Shelby Township, Chesterfield Township, New Baltimore, Romeo Police Department and the fire departments of Bruce-Romeo. Washington Township will go live the same day as the Sheriff's Department.

Going live in January will be Roseville, Fraser, Eastpointe, St. Clair Shores, Utica, New Haven and the Metroparks Authority. By mid-year 2007, the Macomb Medical Control Authority will be online, meaning every EMS in the county will be on the new system.

Other local public safety agencies will be added as they purchase the needed equipment upgrades.

"We have the capacity and capability to include all local municipalities," said Lou Mioduszewski, emergency manager for Macomb County. "Now, one radio can reach anyone in the state provided they have compatible equipment."

The \$13.2 million project was approved by the Macomb County Board of Commissioners in 2003 and includes the construction of a new dispatch center, the replacement of all the old radio equipment and a network of nine towers to handle the new signal.

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The new dispatch center adds two dispatch stations for a total of eight (and is wired for 10 stations) and moves them from a cramped windowless room to a new facility with more space and windows.

Dispatch equipment upgrades in the new center include computers and a “talk group” program that makes handling multiple calls and switching between multiple conversations as easy as clicking a mouse.

“We are really excited for the new facility and equipment,” said Laura Peeples, dispatch supervisor for the Sheriff’s Office. “It’s going to make our dispatch process run much smoother and increase the number of people we can help.”

### **About Macomb County**

Macomb County is an enriching community in Southeastern Michigan that has one of the state’s fastest rates of growth. Its 834,000 residents make it Michigan’s third-largest county, with direct access to Lake St. Clair and Anchor Bay, and a host of cultural and entertainment options. Its highly skilled workforce and investment in new and expanding businesses make it open to enterprise. Active civic leadership translates into balanced budgets and Michigan’s second-lowest tax rate. An increasingly diverse population and high quality of life make Macomb County accessible to all.

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