

# Newsletter

January 2020

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Volume 4, Edition 1



## Network expansion continues with new cell site builds

New coverage will help advance public safety, improve connectivity for area residents and visitors

First responders in Yamhill and Washington counties in Oregon are getting a major boost in their wireless communications with the launch of a FirstNet cell site. The site, located in rural Yamhill County, is part of the FirstNet network expansion taking place in Oregon, bringing you enhanced coverage, capacity and capability. Plus, the FirstNet site will give you access to the fastest overall network experience.\*

To ensure AT&T and the FirstNet Authority are putting coverage and capacity where first responders need it most, the FirstNet build is being done with direct feedback from state and public safety officials. Public safety stakeholders identified this location as a prime spot for increased network coverage and capacity to better

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## Technology helping protect firefighters

Reliable connectivity can help protect firefighters when they're responding to a call. Watch to learn how Leon Valley Fire Department uses FirstNet to monitor the safety of its firefighters. [WATCH VIDEO](#)

### “For us, FirstNet has worked the first time, every time.”

**By Michael Naughton**  
City of Leon Valey Fire Chief

When new technology comes out, people promise a lot of things. For example, they'll say your new radios will solve all your problems. Or this new technology is going to take care of everything.

Nationwide, one of the biggest concerns is interoperability. Even in an area that has a regional radio system, we're not all on the same radios. So communication is always going to be an issue.

In Leon Valley, our fire department of about 30 career members is responsible for all hazard response in the city and surrounding area. That's fire, EMS – anything you call for. We need to be able to talk to our own personnel, as well

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## “For us, FirstNet has worked the first time, every time”

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as personnel from other cities.

we would have the communications capabilities we needed. But for us, it's worked the first time, every time.

### Safety and Security

Almost everything we have relies on a computer somehow. And almost every piece of equipment requires internet service or network capabilities. So it's critical that we be able to connect.

On our ambulances, our modems connect to our patient data computers, which records all the relevant information from EMS calls and our cardiac monitors. If we have somebody with a cardiac issue, we can connect to the hospital, transmit a 12-lead EKG. And if they're really sick, we can lock down a Cath Lab or the necessary people so they're waiting for us when we get there.

That communication is so important that it has to work the first time we dial or the first time the computer sends out a request.

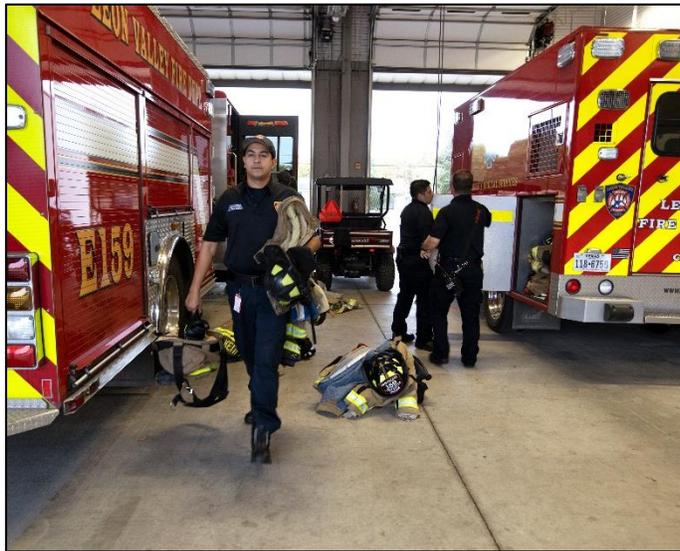
This is important for the safety of our firefighters as well.

Our firefighters wear air packs – which we use to breathe when we're not in a good atmosphere. Through our computers – whether from a vehicle or incident command – we can see every single air pack that's on the scene, by name. We can see how much air they have. If something unsafe happens, we can transmit a signal to tell them to get out of the fire.

We rely on that network to make that happen. It's important for an incident commander to be able to monitor his troops who are in a hazardous condition and be able to see if a firefighter stops moving.

### Communication is key

Several years ago, we responded to a large fire of a 10-story building in a small jurisdiction. The initial response was 4 people from that jurisdiction, 4



*“Every minute delay in communication can mean another life or property loss.”*

**Michael Naughton,**  
Fire Chief, City of Leon Valley

people from ours, and 2 people from somewhere else.

By the time it was over, there were 200 firefighters operating on different radios. This posed a tremendous communications issue. And eventually we had to share radios to be able to talk to each other.

If we can't talk, it's hard for us to let dispatchers or other personnel know what our needs are, what's currently happening. And if we have a slow-down in those communications, that stops us from bringing in the appropriate assets. It delays our response.

Every minute delay in communication can mean another life or property loss, whether that's a big fire or a stranded vehicle in a flood. One minute can be the difference between getting that person out of that vehicle or that vehicle washing down a creek.

### Lifesaving help

In the end, FirstNet is going to help us save lives. It's going to help save the lives of firefighters. It's going to help them manage that incident better and use their resources better, which in the end is going to help save the lives of the people involved or it's going to save property.

All key personnel in the city required

to respond to the Emergency Operations Center to manage disasters or emergencies have a phone on FirstNet. This way they'll have reliable communications with their departments, with outside resources, incoming resources. We rely on it.

If communications is an issue for you – and it's something that you need in your daily business and you want to be able to connect – I would absolutely recommend FirstNet.

*Michael Naughton is Fire Chief for the City of Leon Valley, Texas. He has extensive experience managing municipal EMS systems and regulatory compliance. He served as Fire Chief for the City of Shavano Park Fire Department for almost 9 years and as Assistant Fire Chief for 7 years; and with the cities of Schertz, Alamo Heights and Balcones Heights.*

*Chief Naughton also worked as Director of Emergency Medical Services for Bandera County, Texas. He is a noted expert in Emergency Medical Services and has served as a Training Instructor in the San Antonio region for many years. While with the Shavano Fire Department, he led efforts to be recognized by the Texas Fire Chiefs Association with the Best Practices Department Award.*

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support emergency communications.

"The ability of our first responders to communicate during times of disaster is critical," stated State Representative Ron Noble, who is also a retired McMinnville police chief. "FirstNet's nationwide broadband communications platform is dedicated to the needs of public safety and paves the way for new capabilities and innovations in the way we handle emergencies and serve our communities.

"The launch of this cell site, with more planned across the state, reaffirms that the FirstNet Authority and AT&T remain steadfast in their mission to deliver a solution that meets public safety's needs – today and for decades to come. It's a win for everyone," he added.

"We're excited about FirstNet delivering on the promise of expanding coverage here in Yamhill County and the addition of this site," said Brian Casey, Chief of Police for the Newberg-Dundee Police Department. "It will enhance our agency's ability to communicate and collaborate with other first responders and provides us with cutting-edge technologies that help keep our communities safe."

The FirstNet site is the first to be announced in Oregon following Governor Kate Brown's decision to advance the state's public safety broadband communications with FirstNet. It uses Band 14 spectrum as well as AT&T commercial spectrum bands. Band 14 is nationwide, high-quality spectrum set aside by the government specifically for FirstNet. It provides public safety with a dedicated lane of connectivity when needed. Band 14 has also been added to existing sites across Oregon.

"Oregon's first responders deserve reliable coverage across the state to help them effectively and efficiently address incidents. And with FirstNet, that's exactly what they're getting," said George Granger, president, AT&T Oregon. "We couldn't be more pleased to support the

public safety mission and bring the state's first responders – and residents – greater access to the connectivity they need." In addition to the new cell site, first responder agencies on FirstNet will have access to a fleet of 76 dedicated deployable network assets at no additional charge. Public safety agencies on FirstNet can request the equipment for added support during planned events or emergencies, like the 2018 Sugar Pine/Mile fires in Prospect, Ore. The deployable network asset kept FirstNet subscribers connected to the information they needed to communicate and coordinate their response, and aid in recovery.

FirstNet is also launching cell sites across the country to expand rural and remote coverage – including areas where a lack of connectivity has created a challenge for emergency response. Areas to benefit from a new, purpose-built FirstNet cell site include:

- [Baltimore County, Md.](#)
- [Tilghman Island, Md.](#)
- [Northwestern Minnesota](#)
- [Warren County, N.C.](#)
- [Yamhill County, Ore.](#)
- [Bedford County, Pa.](#)
- [Clinton County, Pa.](#)
- [Fairfax and Prince William Counties, Va.](#)
- [Preston County, W. Va.](#)
- [Red Cliff Reservation, Wis.](#)
- [Owl Creek, Wyo.](#)
- [Mule Creek Junction, Wyo.](#)

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