

911 serves most of Back Mountain

By ERIC FOSTER
Post Staff

911 — three little numbers, but who hasn't heard of them.

Dial those three numbers on your telephone and you expect to get help for an emergency.

In most parts of Luzerne County, however, dialing 911 will connect you with an operator in another part of the state who may not know Scranton from Wilkes-Barre, let alone where you're home is. So valuable time is lost as the operator connects your call to local help.

Also in most of the Back Mountain.

Since December of 1990, anyone calling 911 from the 674, 675, 696, 639, 333, 388 and 477 telephone exchanges will be connected with a dispatcher from the Back Mountain Communications Center, where they'll reach a dispatcher familiar with the area, and the emergency personnel who serve it.

In contrast, the Luzerne County Communications Center expects to have 911 service a year of more from now, according to David Macekura, director of the county center.

The Back Mountain Communications Center dispatches police, fire and ambulance service for Dallas Borough, Dallas Township, Kingston Township, and Jackson Township, while calls from Franklin Township ring at the Wyoming County center.

Harveys Lake and Lake Township are served by the Luzerne County Communications Center.

Because the 639 telephone exchange covers Harveys Lake and parts of Lehman Township, Harveys Lake calls will be connected with the Back Mountain Communications Center even though the borough is not a member. The Harveys Lake police department left the Back Mountain Communications Center in May of 1992 in order to save the money which would normally be spent on membership.

Harveys Lake residents who have an emergency and need to call for police should not call 911. Instead they should call 675-5259 or 639-1690 for police. If the police are not in, the call will be forwarded to the Luzerne County Communications Center. The telephone number for the Harveys Lake Fire department, which has never participated in the Back Mountain Communications Center, remains at 639-5261.

The Back Mountain Communications Center has recently installed a Telecommunication Device for the Deaf, so that deaf residents also can get help quickly.

The center also has recently been approved for a \$30,000 state grant so it can be relocated from the cramped Dallas Township municipal building to a new location, which is likely to be in the Nesbitt Hospital's Medical Center on Route 118.

In an emergency...

When you do call 911 for help, William Alaimo,

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