

*Bench Warmers Program - Valley Sports Teams Help Pets Find Homes*

Maricopa County Employee

# Advantage

December 2013

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# Towering Above

## Flood Control and Office of Enterprise Technology Maintain Radio Communication

The Office of Enterprise Technology (OET) and the Flood Control District inter-department cooperation results in improved safety, customer service, communication and cost reduction.

Most County employees know that there is a Flood Control District and an Office of Enterprise Technology. However, most would not know that these two departments have some common tasks, requiring unique skills and a highly trained and coordinated team of employees. These employees go to great heights (literally) to provide services to employees and residents.

Most of us think of OET when our computers are not working. If you use portable radios you are familiar with the radio shop located at the Durango campus. But, did you know that OET has to maintain communication towers to keep those radios speaking to each other and other public safety organizations?

Maricopa County's OET Wireless Systems Group (Radio Shop) is responsible for the integrity of day-to-day public safety radio communications transmitted and received from several tower locations in the region, servicing nearly 7000 mobile and portable radios in the fleet. Until re-

cently, if new equipment was to be placed on a tower, or if old equipment required removal, or in an emergency/equipment failure or damage, the Radio Shop would contract this tower climbing effort out to licensed contractors.

As residents of Maricopa County, we are used to being advised of high water/flooding situations during our monsoon season. Behind the scenes, the Flood Control District maintains an entire communication system to monitor and collect the data that allows them to alert us of flooding. The Flood Control District of Maricopa County operates a 24-hour rain, stream and weather gage network which provides "real-time" information to the County and many other agencies about rainfall, floods and weather conditions in Maricopa County. Currently the District has 311 automatic rain gages, 167 automatic stream gages and 36 automatic weather stations throughout Maricopa and neighboring counties. This network operates in the National Weather Service ALERT (Automated Local Evaluation in Real Time) format and is commonly referred to as an ALERT system. The ALERT system uses "automatic" telemetry gages for data collection. The gages transmit their information to the District base computers via VHF radio, using 12 Repeaters and 4 frequencies to obtain the data.





Flood warnings are provided to District observation teams, other County departments, city emergency management departments and the National Weather Service. Public flood warnings and other weather advisories are issued by the National Weather Service. Emergencies are declared by the Maricopa County Department of Emergency Management.

These communication systems depend on “line of sight” between the transmitter and receiver. To accomplish this “line of sight” in Maricopa County, the repeater equipment is placed on mountain tops and on towers, and in some cases on towers on mountain tops. In the past, Maricopa County has relied on contractors to maintain the equipment on the towers. About two years ago, OET decided that they could save money and achieve faster turn-around times if they brought this task in house. This year, the OET climb team has conducted 66 hours of repair/maintenance related climbs, saving the County approximately \$19,800 in contractor costs.

OET has a team of four employees who have received training in safe tower climbing and rescue. Juan Ramos, Nicholas Master, Bob Dalmer and Michael Connolly are

the Wireless Systems Tower Crew (WSTC). The crew has now been climbing for over one year, taking care of both demand tower maintenance and preventative repairs.

The task to climb towers internally was not a simple decision. Once assembled, the WSTC spent six months preparing a safety manual that addresses Tower Safety, Radio Frequency (RF) Safety, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and First Aid. Contracted training partners were then brought in to provide certification training for tower climbing, tower inspection, and tower safety rescue certification. The team also completed a two day certification training class in advanced first aid.

These employees are certified climbers and authorized by OET to climb their towers. The Safety Division requested that the OET Wireless System Tower Crew share their experience with Flood Control’s Hydro-meteorological Department. The Hydro-meteorological Department had made a similar decision to develop their own climbing team.

According to Roy Randez, the benefit to Flood Control is that training organizations and equipment vendors have already been identified. Emergency procedures and pro-



gram protocols are already developed and can be modified for use by Flood Control. Roy states that his goal for the “Hydro Team (Brian Irizarry, John Bushelman, Jarrett Cziesch and myself) is to complete the certification course by the end of this year.” The two teams can train together. All members of both teams will be certified climbers and rescuers, providing improved confidence and security for both teams. Quoting Roy, “Knowing you have a resource in another County department is a plus.”

Albert Daigre stated, “To sum it up, this is an awesome experience for both Flood Control and OET and I look forward to seeing all becoming the safest competent climb and rescue team in the valley, benefiting not only Maricopa County, but the region if the duty calls.” He added a statement that was first presented by the Flood Control crew, “We will train as a team, we will work as a team and we will all come back safe as a team.”

The residents of the County benefit by the joint effort since there is a larger pool of trained and competent employees, potential delays in repairs will not be created by a single employee being unavailable due to illness or vacation. Safety is improved, since both teams will now have access to a full complement of climbing team members, with a minimum of three employees.



Part of the job in the Safety Division is finding ways to improve safety for all of our employees. In this case, a simple introduction was all that was needed.



## MVD tightens up Driver's License Application & Renewal Requirements

Laws change all the time dealing with MVD requirements. There has been a significant change in ID requirements for obtaining or renewing an Arizona Driver's or Commercial driver's license.

The requirements are: Two forms of identification – one of which must have a clear photo of you, or three official documents with no photo. All copies or originals must be in English.

### Examples of Primary Documents:

Out-of-state instruction permit/driver's license, birth certificate, U.S. passport, Foreign passport with US Visa, US Certificate of Naturalization, record of previous Arizona ID card or driver's license or an enhanced driver license from another state.

### Examples of Secondary Documents:

US Military ID card, Social Security Card, Selective Service Card, Credit Card, Professional License, Bank Card, Car Vehicle Record, School ID, Employee ID Badge or Court Records.

For a more complete listing, or if you are unsure of a document, you can go to the Arizona MVD online and look at a more complete listing of acceptable documents.

<http://mvd.azdot.gov/mvd/formsandpub/viewPDF.asp?lngProductKey=1410&lngFormInfoKey=1410>

Some other changes that are pending regarding Commercial Driver's license will include:

- Effective January 2014, drivers will not be required to carry their medical card on their person.
- Effective May 2014, drivers will only be able to get medical physicals from physicians who are registered with the national database.

Arizona driver license application or renewal doesn't have to be complicated. We've collected helpful information that will save you some time. We offer links to resources that will get you going in the right direction. Select the link below to get started.

[http://drivers-licenses.org/splash/arizona.html?renew-drivers-license:arizona&utm\\_source=AZ\\_Drivers&utm\\_medium=Link&utm\\_campaign=AZ\\_Site](http://drivers-licenses.org/splash/arizona.html?renew-drivers-license:arizona&utm_source=AZ_Drivers&utm_medium=Link&utm_campaign=AZ_Site)