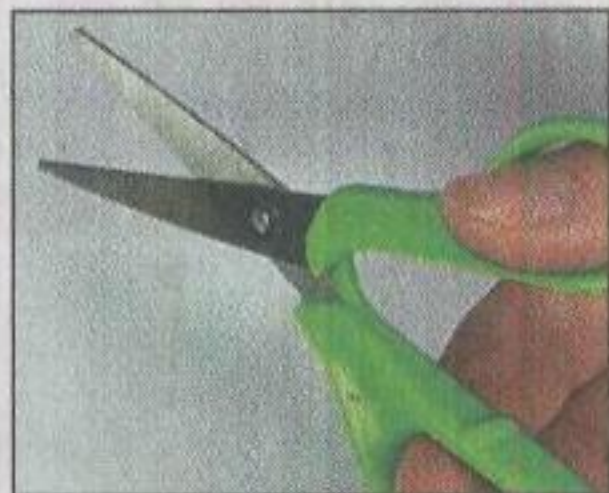


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Chief receives approval to upgrade emergency dispatch system

By Sean Delaney

Digital First Media

The township's outdated medical dispatch system is getting an overhaul, thanks to the efforts of Fire Chief Jim Swinkowski.

At the Feb. 16 Board of Trustees meeting, Swinkowski received approval to purchase new emergency medical dispatch software from PowerPhone, based in Madison, Conn., for a cost not to exceed \$42,548.58.

"Since dispatchers are not medically trained, they must rely on a system they can navigate quickly to provide the information," Swinkowski said. "This

software helps a dispatcher provide first-aid advice and assist the patient prior to the EMS arriving at the scene."

The software will replace the outdated index card the department has been using since 2005.

"Newer computer-based technology provides detailed information that can be sent to the responding ambulances as the dispatcher gathers caller information and provides instructions back to the caller," Swinkowski said. "That's where the biggest benefit comes in. This system will allow the dispatcher to give instructions to the person who is there

with the patient regarding what to do in any given situation."

Prior to making his recommendation to the Board of Trustees, Swinkowski researched two different manufacturers - Priority Dispatch, which is in use in Oakland County, and PowerPhone, which is in use in Macomb County.

After reviewing both systems, Swinkowski recommended PowerPhone based on its "user friendly" interface.

"We can design it, shrink it down and make it more user-friendly for us," he said.

"It can also be integrated with our computer-

aided dispatch for the Fire Department, so when the information comes in it transfers right over. And if you're having something like a heart attack, chest pains, etc., it tells you what to do."

According to Swinkowski, PowerPhone costs about \$37,229, plus an additional \$3,600 to install it at three different work stations.

"Of the two major options, it's much cheaper, and we already have the training certification," he said.

The PowerPhone software will be paid for using approximately \$20,000 from the department's 9/11



SEAN DELANEY — DIGITAL FIRST MEDIA

At the Feb. 16 Board of Trustees meeting, Fire Chief Jim Swinkowski received approval to purchase new emergency medical dispatch software from PowerPhone, based in Madison, Conn., for a cost not to exceed about \$42,549.

Emergency Response Fund from the Equipment Fund, and approximately \$22,548