



September 28, 2017
Village of Deerfield
For Immediate Release

Deerfield-Bannockburn-Riverwoods Dispatch Center Aids Puerto Rican Hospital in Need of Fuel

DEERFIELD, IL - On Saturday, September 23, at approximately 10 a.m., a Riverwoods resident contacted the Deerfield-Bannockburn-Riverwoods Dispatch Center seeking assistance with a desperate and unusual request – fuel for a hospital in Puerto Rico to save the lives of 20 patients on life support.

The resident, subsequent to the events of Hurricane Maria, had been in contact via email with an administrator from a hospital in Puerto Rico. Because of sporadic and limited communication on the island, the administrator was seeking assistance in locating fuel to power a generator being used to keep 20 patients alive at the center.

The local resident had contacted numerous agencies (including media outlets, political officials and emergency management organizations) for assistance without success. Having tried all other resources, the resident finally resorted to dialing 9-1-1 and spoke with Telecommunicator Desirae Kuceba, who was willing and able to come to her aid. Kuceba dispatched an Officer to the caller's home to gather further information and then proceeded to locate someone to provide assistance. After numerous phone calls she located someone who would listen, the American Red Cross.

The Red Cross contacted the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), who then had a representative contact the original caller to arrange a fuel dispatch to the hospital the following morning. With limited communication, a lack of fuel and a strict curfew, the hospital staff responded to the hospital to await delivery. The delivery, however, was hijacked and stolen. A new delivery was scheduled and a successful delivery occurred with little time to spare for the 20 patients relying on the fuel for life support.

“Through the efforts of our hardworking 911 dispatchers, normally only heroes on a local scale, 20 lives were saved,” said Mary Anne Glowacz, Communications Supervisor for the Deerfield Police Department. “We are humbled by the outpour of support we’ve received from the community.”

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Released by the Deerfield Police Department
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