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Delaware County's 9-1-1 Center Installs Active Workstations for Dispatchers

DELAWARE, Ohio — Work and a workout have become a reality for Delaware County's 9-1-1 dispatchers. Late in January, the county's 9-1-1 Center was retrofitted to include 15 new workstations, including one with a treadmill and one with a stationary bicycle, both of which can be used while a dispatcher answers calls.

"We got the idea at the NENA (National Emergency Number Association) convention in Denver last year," said Delaware County Director of Emergency Communications Patrick Brandt. His initial goal was to find workstations with keyboards and monitors that could be raised and lowered. Such workstations have helped reduce the incidence of carpal tunnel syndrome and neck pain in dispatchers, who work 8- to 12-hour shifts.

While at the convention, Brandt also noticed stations that added freestanding treadmills and stationary bikes to workstations. The county already had budgeted about \$700,000 to upgrade its telecommunications system: With cost savings on those bids, the county was able to carve out the \$261,600 needed to change out the old workstations for the new and improve the electrical system and carpeting.

Brandt is not aware of any other emergency communications center in central Ohio or the state that has installed both types of exercise stations. He said the treadmill has been an immediate hit with the 23 full-time and two part-time dispatchers currently employed by the center. The treadmill's pace can be set anywhere from 0.4 miles per hour up to 4 mph in walking speed and Brandt said most of those who use it find 1.5 mph or slightly lower to be the best pace for walking and getting work done.

For more information about Delaware County, please visit our website at www.co.delaware.oh.us.

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Photos attached (2): DelCo Treadmill Workstation.jpg; DelCo Bike Workstation.jpg. Credit: Courtesy of Delaware County 9-1-1 Center