

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Release of Township and Borough Public Works Employees to Respond to Fire Calls

HELLERTOWN, PA – July 29, 2009 – The two communities of Hellertown and Lower Saucon Township are working cooperatively to enhance the safety of their citizens. Hellertown Borough Manager Charlie Luthar and Lower Saucon Township Manager Jack Cahalan announced today the implementation of a joint policy, adopted by both the Borough and Township Councils this month that will allow the release of Borough and Township Public Works employees who are trained firefighters to respond to fire calls in the Saucon Valley region. Faced with the same dwindling number of volunteers that is impacting volunteer fire companies' nationwide, the local volunteer fire companies were finding it more difficult to assemble a cadre of firefighters to respond to fire calls in the area during the 6 AM – 6 PM weekday period. The five (5) Fire Companies (Dewey Fire Company; Se-Wy-Co Fire Company; Leithsville Fire Company; Southeastern Fire Company and the Steel City Fire Company) that provide fire protection services to Hellertown Borough and Lower Saucon Township, appealed to the local municipal governments to release their Public Works employees who are trained firefighters to respond to fire calls with these companies during this critical weekday period. The Public Works employees, two (2) in Lower Saucon Township and two (2) in Hellertown Borough will respond and augment the mutual aid response that the area fire companies have used for years to answer fire calls, with certain exceptions, such as when they are involved with duties such as snow plowing and paving.

To Gail Nolf, the President of the Hellertown Borough Council, this new procedure means that, "releasing public works employees for fire calls will further enhance the safety and security of both Hellertown and Lower Saucon Township citizens' lives and property. This process already works in other communities, but the unique feature of the Saucon Valley endeavor is the cooperation between five (5) fire companies and two (2) municipalities – Hellertown and Lower Saucon Township".

Glenn Kern, the President of the Lower Saucon Township Council stated that "this program helps to address the volunteer fire crunch experienced across Pennsylvania and is a further example of the spirit of partnership in our communities".

Tom Barndt, Chief of the Se-Wy-Co Fire Company in Lower Saucon Township, felt that "this new policy will definitely assist the fire departments with manpower issues for daytime response to emergency calls, It is great to have such a superior working relationship between the two municipalities and the five Saucon Valley Fire Departments".

Rick Delmore, Chief at the Borough's Dewey Fire Company, described the new policy as "a perfect example of cooperative efforts between the fire departments and municipalities for the betterment and safety of all residents".

For more information contact:

Jack Cahalan, Township Manager
Lower Saucon Township
3700 Old Philadelphia Pike
Bethlehem, PA 18015
(610) 865-3291
FAX (610) 867-3580

Charles Luthar, Borough Manager
Borough of Hellertown
685 Main Street
Hellertown, PA 18055
(610) 838-7041
FAX (610) 838-0500