



# Westmoreland County Department of Emergency Services

## *Division of Emergency Management*

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Montross, Virginia 22520

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### MONTHLY UPDATE NOVEMBER 2025

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November 29, 2025

#### Introduction

The purpose of the Update Brief is to provide staff and leadership with a clear, comprehensive overview of ongoing radio communications projects, operational enhancements, and upcoming milestones. This briefing ensures that all departments remain informed, aligned, and prepared for upcoming changes, while promoting transparency, coordination, and effective decision-making across the organization. Requests to be added or removed can be sent to [radiohelp@westmoreland-county.org](mailto:radiohelp@westmoreland-county.org).

#### December 2025 Goals

- Work with each Firehouse, EMS Station and Annex and begin planning to establish an SSID named "Radio" on the WiFi network. Password requirement will be distributed upon request.
- Work with Motorola to order flashcodes for all APX8000 and 8500 radios
- Work with each Fire Department to begin the turn in of all APX6000 radios

#### Mount Holly Annex

The Emergency Management division runs special response and technology operations from the annex located at the address below.

65 Mt Holly Road  
Montross, VA 22520

Support Requests:  
[radiohelp@westmoreland-county.org](mailto:radiohelp@westmoreland-county.org)  
Phone: 804-410-7123

#### Critical Updates

Radios with the following error messages require immediate update. While they will function properly for now, radio infrastructure changes are underway and these radios are in danger of being blocked from communicating. *Appointments required via:* [radiohelp@westmoreland-county.org](mailto:radiohelp@westmoreland-county.org)

- **REGISTRATION FAILED:** Units showing this message are no longer in the Motorola configuration manager and the radio ID is not in compliance with the new standard. These must be reprogrammed or they will be blocked in future upgrades.
- **KEY FAIL:** Units showing this message do not have the proper encryption keys. Radios with older programming may still have the old security keys and will not show this error. If not addressed by Sep 2026, they will no longer be able to communicate on the network. These radios must be reprogrammed.

### **APXNext Radios Fielded**

- APXNext radios have been fielded to the Sheriff's Office, EMS, and Fire Services
- Each user has been provided with a PowerPoint quick guide, an APXnext user guide and one-on-one training
- Those individually assigned users who have not received their radio refresh will be added to the next refresh wave during the next consolidated purchase period (March 2026)
- All requests for radio refresh must be submitted via [radiohelp@westmoreland-county.org](mailto:radiohelp@westmoreland-county.org).

### **New Encryption Keys**

All encryption is being upgraded across the radio fleet. New keys have been created and implementation is underway. Key distribution is limited to county owned devices and those covered via the communications MOU with county agencies and our mutual aid partners.

- Fire / EMS: WDES 1
- Sheriff: WCSO 1
- Key loading will occur as part of the lifecycle/refresh program. No need to schedule an appointment.
- Instructions will be added to the Communications Operating Instructions and made available to all staff.

### **Radio Central System**

Radio Central is the mandatory method used for programming all Motorola radios in the county fleet. This provides over the air programming along with template management. Individual programming of county radios is not authorized.

- All APXnext radios have been added
- APX8000 and APX8500 radios are scheduled to be added beginning in January.
- APX6000, 6500 and 7000 radios will no longer be permitted on our primary network

### **Fleetwide Radio Refresh (Due September 30, 2026)**

Each radio in the fleet will undergo a refresh. This includes:

- Adding new radio capabilities to include 7/800, trunking, and WiFi
- Replacing batteries
- Updating standardized codeplugs
- Installing new encryption keys
- Updating IDs in Motorola Configuration Manager

### **Full Encryption**

Continuing to improve operational security, we will be adding full time encryption to all primary channels. This will be facilitated by adding two additional zones WCES encrypted and WCSO encrypted. The current zones WCES and WCSO will remain unencrypted.

In addition to providing security, this change will resolve a significant user issue. Currently users inadvertently move their switch to "encryption on", and then are unaware that others cannot hear their traffic. This change will give them an audible tone if they attempt to speak while encrypted on a clear channel and visa versa.

### **January**

- Establish radio programming network via WiFi at each department
- Receive flash codes to enable wifi capability in all APX8000 and 8500 radios

- Turn in all APX6000 radios

### **February**

- Sheriff vehicles and radios updated by appointment
- EMS vehicles and radios updated by station
- Departments to turn in all spares and non-critical radios for reprogramming
  - These radios will be used to facilitate department wide upgrades by wave
- Final opportunity for radios issued to individuals to be programmed (**no appointments after February**)

### **Department Rollout Schedule (Vehicle mounted equipment only)**

- **March 14-16:** Company 6
- **March 21-23:** Company 5
- **April 11-13:** Company 4
- **May 9-11:** Company 3
- **June 6-8:** Company 2
- **July 18-20:** Company 1

### **August**

- New keys loaded into ECC radios

### **September**

- Final testing and systemwide encryption cutover
- Radios not turned in for required programming will **no longer receive voice traffic**

### **October**

- School radios added to the network (APX6000)

### **Vehicle WiFi Cradle Points**

Cradle point installations will occur across all county vehicles to support IoT and future operational needs.

### **Emergency Response Team**

ERT planning continues, with new SOPs and policies to be released in the near future.

### **County Email for Fire Chiefs**

Fire Chiefs may request an official county email account by contacting [radiohelp@westmoreland-county.org](mailto:radiohelp@westmoreland-county.org).

### **Active 911 Updates**

Active 911 has transitioned to group notifications. Users can now select which stations they wish to receive alerts for. This has been in place since August 2025. All requests for removal or new user activation should be sent to the radio help email address.

### **MDIS Program**

- All devices have been received and programmed
- APN setup for CAD connectivity underway (estimated 30 days)
- Mounting installations will be scheduled.

### **Sheriff's Office Cell Phone Project**

- Devices are ready to migrate to FN
- Personnel not needing to keep their current number may migrate first
- A list of names and associated phone numbers is needed to begin migration

### **Microsoft Teams Community**

Personnel may join the Teams community to receive updates, view informational bulletins, and participate in Q&A.

**Community Link:** <https://teams.live.com/join/community/FAATH5DIZym4dghygM>