

911 EMERGENCY SYSTEM GEARING UP

By Gerry Cherry
Staff Writer

■(GIT) Realizing the need for fast response to emergencies in Oklahoma, HB1382 was passed by the Legislature in April 1995, creating a "Statewide Emergency 911 Advisory Committee." Principal authors Rep. Sean Voskuhl, D-Marshall, and Sen. Ben Robinson, D-Muskogee, established guidelines for committee personnel and activities.

The committee, composed of 18 appointed members, was to "develop minimum performance standards for equipment and operation of a statewide 911 emergency telephone service, including automatic number identification . . . and any other features the committee considers appropriate."

The advisory committee was also charged with determining an assessment amount and sources for a statewide system, and make recommendations about distribution of the fee. The committee issued a final report to Gov. Keating, Speaker of the House Glen Johnson and President Pro Tempore of the Senate Stratton Taylor.

Committee members are also mandated to set a timetable for implementation of a

statewide 911 system by September 1, 1998.

During the second session of the 45th Legislature, Sen. Lewis Long Jr, D-Glenpool, and Rep. Shelby Satterfield, D-Tulsa, introduced SB1270. The bill directs the Statewide 911 Emergency Advisory Committee to "consider the presumption that all providers of dial tone are obligated to participate in the provision of 911 service and its funding." The bill passed with an emergency clause and Gov. Keating signed it May 20, 1996.

Oklahoma has approximately 80 emergency 911 systems, in some form, covering 25 percent of the state, said Rebecca Leikheim, president of the Oklahoma chapter of the National Emergency Number Association (NENA). Through her organization, Oklahoma was 38th to apply for chapter recognition. The group will celebrate their first anniversary, Dec. 26.

NENA is dedicated to public education regarding the 911 system, Leikheim said, and is now 5,000 members strong, composed of law enforcement professionals, fire fighters, emergency medical personnel and the "people who run 911 centers."

A statewide public education program is underway to assist in resolving existing service problems, Leikheim said. "There are a lot of problems nationally with the 911 system because of changes in technology," Leikheim said. Basic, and oldest, 911 service displays the phone number on the emergency receiver. Until recently, Oklahoma's best system displayed the phone number, name and address, only. "Caller ID provides more information than that," Leikheim said.

But one area of Oklahoma has established a state-of-the-art 911 emergency system, and two more are on the way. Muldrow, in Sequoyah County utilizes a system enhanced by computer mapping and the satellite global positioning system — in emergency vehicles. Complete computer demographics for some areas, delivered by residents and businesses on a voluntary basis, give emergency crews information about possible hazardous materials nearby or residents on respirators if the electricity fails. Information about oxygen tanks in homes is available to firefighters, when residents give them the information to add to the computer base.

Choctaw County is setting up the same type system, funded by a federal grant after the area was declared an enterprise zone.

In western Sequoyah County, Sallisaw

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TINKER RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD

By Michelle Boyd Waters
Staff Writer

■(GIT) Tinker Air Force Base won top honors for its federal energy activities project in the National Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Awards competition, said Sherwood Washington, director of the Community Affairs and Development Division of the Oklahoma Department of Commerce. Central & South West Corporation of Tulsa and the City of Guymon were also recognized.

These awards recognize individuals, institutions, companies and government agencies that implement energy-related measures that benefit the nation's environment, economy and security. Top winners were recognized at an awards ceremony in Washington, D.C. by Assistant Energy Secretary Christine Ervin.

"We're proud of the accomplishments of our state winners who were recognized by the Department of Energy with these prestigious awards," said Leo Presley, executive director of the Commerce Department. "These programs demonstrate how committed Oklahoma is to preserving precious energy resources through the development and promotion of responsible energy use."

Tinker was recognized for promoting the use of clean renewable energy resources in the design of large-scale systems. Tinker also introduced new technologies into the marketplace such as photovoltaics and wind turbines.

Tinker received an etched glass trophy from the DOE for its efforts.

A Tulsa company, Central & South West Corporation, the parent company of Public Service Company of Oklahoma, won special recognition in the utility technology category and the City of Guymon received a certificate of recognition in the transportation technology category, Washington said.

Central & South West Corporation received special recognition for a \$17 million effort to construct, operate, evaluate and promote the use of renewable energy sources and state-of-the-art renewable energy technologies.

The Tulsa company received a mounted four-color certificate for its special recognition.

The City of Guymon converted its municipal vehicles to natural gas and built its own fueling station. The conversion of each vehicle cost \$2,500. However, the city will save enough money to pay for the conversion.

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Communities also would be allowed to establish local boards to coordinate and administer sentencing options and assess long-term needs under the auspices of the Oklahoma Department of Corrections.

Paulk said the interim studies have not met yet.

Members of the Truth in Sentencing Commission include John Wampler, District 3 district attorney; Sam Gonzales, Oklahoma City chief of police; Susan Loving, Pardon and Parole Board representative; the Honorable Daniel L. Owens, Oklahoma County district court judge; Robert "Bob" Ravitz, Oklahoma County chief public defender; Michael Roark, chairman of the Board of Corrections; Steidley; Richard Wintory, chief deputy attorney general of the criminal division; Weldon Stout, Muskogee; the Honorable Gary Lumpkin, Court of Criminal Appeals judge; Sheriff Doug Powell, Logan County; Charles Richardson, Trial Lawyers Association representative; Cliff Sandel, Oklahoma Department of Corrections; the Honorable Joseph M. Watt, Oklahoma Supreme Court justice and Paul O'Connell, executive director of the commission.