**ROANOKE COUNTY NEWS RELEASE**
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## For Immediate Release

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# Roanoke County 911 Center Hosts Open House April 20

***Event to Coincide with National Telecommunicators Week***

ROANOKE COUNTY, VA (April 5, 2013) – Roanoke County's Emergency Communications Center (ECC) handles more than 200,000 calls each year. Later this month, the public will have an opportunity to meet the dedicated employees who answer those 9-1-1 calls that can often make the difference between life and death.

In recognition of National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week, Roanoke County is hosting an open house at the ECC on Saturday, April 20 from 1 p.m until 3 p.m. The 9-1-1 dispatchers in the ECC is are first responders who with emergency medical service, fire, and law enforcement to save lives, protect property, and combat crime by providing cross-agency communication and public education. Roanoke County's ECC is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies. It is one of only 63 public safety communications centers nationwide with this distinction. Furthermore, all ECC personnel are certified in CPR and have their Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD) certification by the time they finish their extensive initial training program. EMD enables a Communications Officer to assist citizens over the phone with medical instructions until a first responder arrives on scene. This certification saves lives.

The second week of April each year is dedicated nationally to the men and women who serve as public safety telecommunicators. This recognition was formally established by the U.S. Congress in H.J. Res. 284 in October 1991. The first Presidential Proclamation was by George H.W. Bush on March 18, 1992. This year, public safety telecommunicators will be recognized nationally April 14-20, 2013.

The ECC is located in the Public Safety Center at 5925 Cove Road in Roanoke. For more information, call 562-3265.

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