

## OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW—MORE WAYS TO SHARE INFORMATION

It used to be that all audio reproductions were copied on CDs for sharing, but new technology now offers more ways. Of course 9-1-1 centers can still rely on the old standby of burning CDs, but now they can also email links to incident folders or individual audio files, and even provide direct secure access through password protection. “If it’s a subpoena request, or an attorney request, then we’ll burn the set of recordings on a CD and distribute it that way,” says LVMPD’s Fason. “That’s how we handle it for any external parties. For our detectives, we email audio as a windows media file.”

Whereas the LVMPD does not use the direct access method, the City of Westminster uses this option routinely to distribute incident folders and their contents to some detectives.

Prior to implementing the new tool, Marquez says that detectives received .wav file audio recordings on CDs. Now detectives can access incident folders directly, provided they have assigned access rights.

“I like that we have different options to choose from,” says Marquez. “I create the audio reproduction, put it in the incident folder, and give the detective access so he or she can: review the incident exactly as it unfolded; add evidence items to the incident timeline; add reports, photos, CAD notes, and any other documentation needed; and then make their own CD, and distribute it. Everything is permissions based and every action is tracked for chain of custody.”

While Marquez gives detectives direct access to the system, she still makes use of CDs for fulfilling external and other requests.

“For the citizens out there, they are requesting just the 9-1-1 call(s) and CAD notes, so we just send a CD with the .wav file and a paper copy of the CAD chronology.”

Where more information would be helpful, but direct access is not a viable option, Marquez says it’s possible to distribute the entire incident folder and its contents, along with an executable file for the media player (with or without a password), either on a CD or via a shared network drive.

When a recipient receives the CD, he or she can open up the file, replay the audio recordings and view associated documents exactly as they appeared when created. But

the recipient does not have access to the actual evidence management system and cannot edit or add to the content or incident folder. Marquez uses this stop gap method to distribute incident reproductions to internal affairs and investigators who don’t have direct access to the system.

She also uses this method to provide the fire services with audio reproductions after every structure fire (so they can go through a debriefing process), although instead of placing the incident folder and audio recordings on a CD, she emails them.

“It took me a while to actually remember what our day-to-day work life was like before we had this technology, all of the steps it took to create an incident, and all of the duplicate and manual work we had to do, because we’ve had it for so long,” says Marquez. “But I absolutely love it. I don’t know where we’d be without it.” ●

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