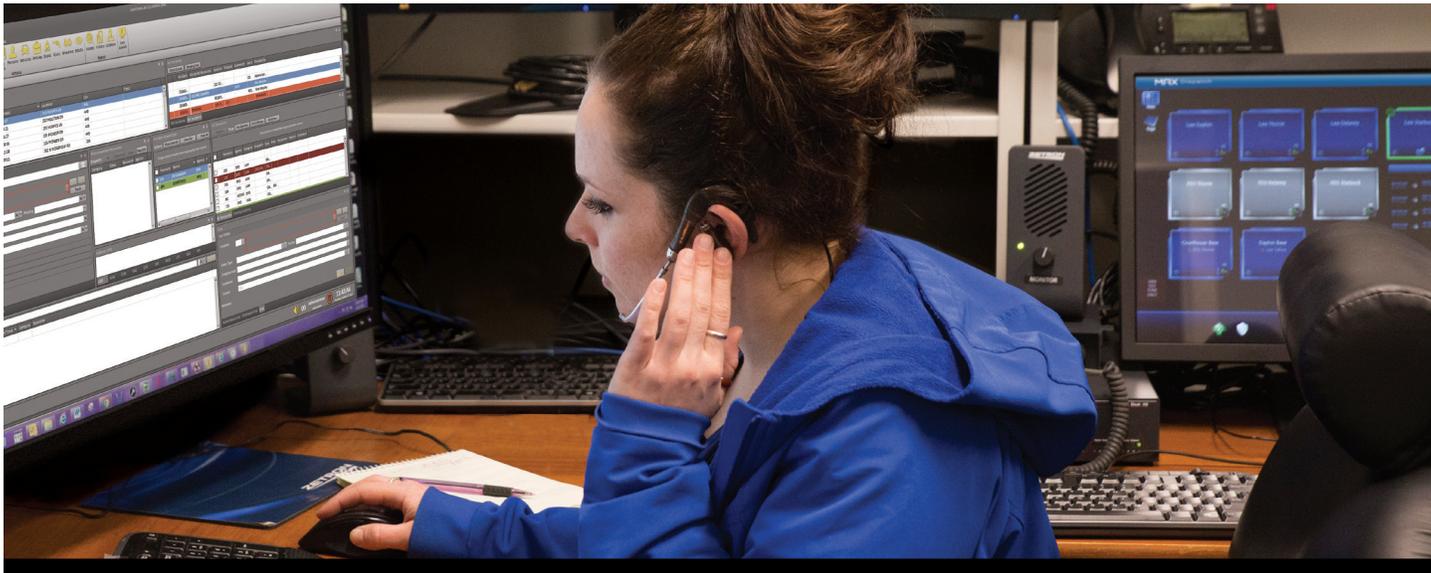


## Case Study

Location: Columbia County, WA

Product: MAX Dispatch / MAX Call Taking



# Columbia County Improves Public Safety with Zetron's MAX Dispatch System

Located in Southeast Washington State at the base of the Blue Mountains, Columbia County consists of 867 square miles of rolling hills, deep canyons and rugged wilderness. The region is known for its expansive wheat fields, and beautiful scenery.

More than half of the county's population lives in the city of Dayton, located in the middle of the rural county. Dayton is the county seat, and the location of the Columbia County Public Safety Communications and Emergency Management Center, which serves as the area's primary Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP).

The center handles all of the county's 9-1-1 calls and provides dispatch services for twenty two agencies; including three fire jurisdictions, two ambulance companies, and the sheriff's office, which is the county's only law enforcement agency. On average, the Columbia County emergency dispatch center handles 22,000 phone calls and 19,000 radio dispatches annually.

## Columbia County Implements Next Generation 9-1-1 (NG9-1-1) Over Several Years

As part of a state-wide effort to move every public safety entity to Next Generation 9-1-1 services and onto the i3 ESINet, Columbia County has been upgrading its operations for the past several years, including having already replaced its outdated 9-1-1 phone system with Zetron's IP-based E9-1-1 call handling technology, MAX Call Taking.

The county's previous call tracking system was connected to its legacy proprietary ESINet and a deteriorating and outdated 9-1-1 radio communication system.

The plan was to upgrade the radio system and cut over to the i3 ESINet later. But first the county needed to identify how to raise \$500,000 to install a radio system that would meet the county's basic needs and comply with new Federal Communication Commission requirements.

## Small Sales Tax Increase Pays for New System

To raise the money needed to update the radio system and remodel the center, the county gained voter approval for a sales and emergency communications use tax increase amounting to 1/10th of 1% to provide stable funding for the future.

Because there were several moving parts, the project start and finish required a high level of coordination. "We were remodeling the dispatch center, removing old equipment, installing the MAX Dispatch system, cutting over to the new ESINet, and implementing a new radio repeater project, all of which had specific deadlines," said Lisa Caldwell, then county emergency manager. "We needed to consider how the remodel and new implementations would affect the services we provided to the community."

## New Dispatch, Radio System and a Center Remodel

Columbia County ordered the system and had it shipped to Industrial Communications, an authorized Zetron partner located in Spokane, WA for staging. Once the equipment was ready for installation, it was then transported to the Dayton Communications Center where two Industrial Communications technicians relocated the old equipment and setup the new MAX Dispatch system.

The MAX Dispatch system was integrated seamlessly with Zetron's MAX Call Taking system already in place and easily incorporated into the county's communications ecosystem.

The center remodel began just weeks later and the full transition to the new system was complete within a month. At the same time, Columbia County began the transition to the new ESINet II, and soon thereafter began a new tower implementation, including moving Zetron gateways.

"It was a hectic month in our communications center. All new equipment and dispatch consoles needed to be installed while removing the old system and maintaining operations," said Caldwell. "Making the transition without experiencing downtime was critical, and we managed to complete the cutover without losing a single 9-1-1 call. There was no more important short term measure of success for the project."

## Intuitive 9-1-1 Dispatch Increases Officer Safety

"Industrial Communications provided onsite training to the dispatchers. The training was intuitive and needed no further explanation," said Caldwell.

In addition to having a highly configurable and user-friendly Graphic User Interface (GUI), MAX Dispatch also offers an industry leading set of radio interfaces, multiple broadband LTE Push-To-Talk over cellular interfaces, and is standards-based, allowing it to be interoperable with most industry standard radios and components.

"The dispatchers were able to have quite a bit of say in how they wanted the system configured. We now have the ability to view the unit call history, hit a button for automatic playback, and see unit tracking on the screen, all of which increases officer safety and awareness."

## Full Zetron Center Reduces Costs

The addition of the MAX Dispatch system with the MAX Call Taking system already in place made Columbia County's center a full Zetron communications platform site, which reduced the number of vendors, maintenance contracts, and equipment the county uses.

"There's no doubt that Zetron's emergency communications solutions have drastically improved our ability to service our community. It's really their customer service that sets them apart. When Zetron learned about our need for a second media server for the transition to the new ESINet, they stood by their promise to provide a complete next-gen compatible phone system within the original budget and proposal," said Caldwell.

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