

PUBLIC SAFETY INSIDER

Dedicated. Professional. Always Ready — Atlantic City Public Safety

Inside the Issue

Get a sneak peek at what's inside this month's newsletter:

- Spotlight on Service:**
 Recognizing exemplary work and outstanding contributions from individuals and teams across all departments. See who's been making a difference!
- Training & Equipment:**
 Updates on current and upcoming training opportunities, as well as new equipment and resources available to help us do our jobs even better.
- Chief's Corner:**
 Updates, insights, and words of encouragement from our Chiefs, sharing priorities and perspectives with our teams.
- Community Calendar:**
 Stay informed about upcoming events and important dates happening in our community this month.



40-TON 9/11 SAND SCULPTURE BY ARTIST JOHN GOWDY

Recognizing Service, Sharing Success

WELCOME

Welcome to the November edition of the Public Safety Insider, our internal newsletter created to highlight and recognize the incredible work of the Police Department, Fire Department, and Beach Patrol. Each month, we share important updates and celebrate the remarkable efforts that keep our community safe.

Inside, you'll find stories of individual achievement, department milestones, training opportunities, and words from our leadership. This newsletter is your space—to recognize each other, stay informed, and strengthen the bond between our teams. Thank you for your continued dedication and commitment to excellence.

Safety Tip: Ready for Early Nightfall

With darkness setting in sooner, double-check your flashlights, vehicle lights, and reflective gear before each shift. Strong lighting and visibility are key for safe responses and clear communication, whether you're on the street, at a scene, or on patrol. Staying prepared for early nightfall helps keep you and your team safe throughout the season.



Atlantic City Police Department

Spotlight on Service

On September 26, 2025, Officers William Harned and Alexander Defeo responded to a stabbing near Carver Hall, where a male victim sustained life-threatening injuries. Acting quickly, the officers located a vehicle matching the suspect’s description and initiated a stop. When the suspect, Fateen Gains, attempted to flee on foot and reached toward his pocket, the officers remained calm and tactically sound, ultimately taking him into custody safely—without the use of force.

Despite the tense and rapidly evolving situation, Officers Harned and Defeo maintained professional composure and demonstrated exceptional decision-making and restraint. Their ability to effect a lawful arrest without a critical incident exemplifies the highest standards of policing and dedication to community safety. Both officers are commended for their exemplary service.



This Month in Pictures



In October 2025, Atlantic City Police Officer Matt Schmidt swam into the bay to rescue an injured dog that had escaped from animal control, safely bringing it back to shore to be reunited with its owner.



Battalion Chief Gregory DeSantis (left), Deputy Chief Kevin Munn (center), and Fire Captain Matthew Myrtetus (right) celebrate their recent promotions within the Atlantic City Fire Department.



A Message from the Fire Chief

Chief’s Corner

As we move through the year, I want to take a moment to express my gratitude for the dedication and professionalism each of you bring to the Fire Department. The work we do is never easy, but your commitment to training, preparedness, and supporting one another is what keeps our department strong. Whether you’re responding to emergencies or participating in community outreach, your actions reflect the very best of what it means to serve.

Looking ahead, let’s continue to prioritize safety and teamwork. Remember that every call and every training session is an opportunity to learn and grow together. I am proud to work alongside such a skilled and passionate team, and I have no doubt that our continued collaboration will help us meet whatever challenges come our way. Thank you for your service and dedication.

Stay safe,
Chief Scott Evans



Atlantic City Fire Department

Training & Equipment



The Atlantic City Fire Department (ACFD) conducted an intensive, four-week collapse and rescue training program at Bader Field in September and October, providing firefighters with advanced skills in structural emergency response. The course offered comprehensive instruction in managing building collapse scenarios, emphasizing both firefighter safety and effective rescue operations.

Participants practiced simulated rescues, including locating and extricating victims from collapsed structures, stabilizing unstable debris, and operating specialized equipment such as high-powered saws, acetylene torches, and jackhammers. The training also reinforced teamwork, communication, and decision-making under high-stress conditions, ensuring firefighters are fully prepared to respond efficiently and safely to real-world emergencies.

Atlantic City Beach Patrol

Historical Fact

In August 1881, Atlantic City established one of the nation's first professional beach patrols to ensure public safety along its busy shoreline. By the following summer, 20 guards were on duty, enforcing strict bathing hours from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. This commitment to beach safety set a lifesaving standard that continues to guide the Atlantic City Beach Patrol's work today.



This Month in Pictures

During the October 2025 Nor'easter, Lt. Jody Hersch distributed meals from Ocean Casino and Showboat Resort to Atlantic City first responders on duty throughout the storm.



Community leader James Kutch and ACPD Sgt. Jonathan Walsh were honored by the Atlantic City Police Foundation for their service and bravery. Hard Rock Hotel & Casino donated to support the Police Foundation & Firefighter Union.



Atlantic City Beach Patrol

Spotlight on Service

On Friday, August 22, 2025, Deputy Chief Dave Russo and Lead Lifeguard Kevin Wallace spotted a surfer being pushed far out to sea at New Hampshire Avenue Beach amid extremely rough conditions from Hurricane Erin.

Wallace quickly deployed the Beach Patrol drone while Russo guided it toward the surfer. Using the drone’s speaker, they communicated with him via hand signals to confirm he needed assistance. A rescue ski was then deployed and reached the surfer approximately 1,500 feet from shore, bringing him safely back to the beach.

Through quick thinking, teamwork, and innovative use of drone technology, Russo and Wallace ensured a safe outcome in challenging conditions. Their professionalism, skill, and dedication highlight the Beach Patrol’s commitment to using modern tools to protect the community.



Atlantic City Beach Patrol

Spotlight on Service

On September 22, 2025, Lieutenant Kyle Deroo and Lifeguard Mike Awad responded to two swimmers caught in a rip tide at Tennessee Avenue Beach. With minimal staffing on duty, they acted quickly, reaching both victims and navigating a strong current to bring them safely to shore.

After assisting the second swimmer, she suddenly collapsed, bleeding from her nose, mouth, and ears, and lost consciousness. Deroo, a certified EMT, immediately stabilized her while Lt. Tom Flynn arrived to assist with CPR. Thanks to their rapid, professional response, the patient was stabilized and transported to the hospital.

Deroo, Awad, and Flynn’s composure, skill, and decisive action under extreme pressure exemplify the highest standards of first responders and their unwavering commitment to community safety.



Beyond the Badge

Atlantic City Beach Patrol lifeguard Justin Figueroa has followed his passion for boxing since age five, when his father began teaching him the sport after a neighborhood scuffle. A standout athlete at Holy Spirit High School, Figueroa excelled in football, wrestling, track, and baseball before seeking a summer job in 2017 to help with college expenses. Encouraged by friends, he joined the Beach Patrol through Rookie School—a challenging experience he describes as one of the toughest of his life, pushing him physically and mentally as he trained in the open ocean.



Figueroa credits the Beach Patrol with developing his confidence, social skills, and discipline, traits that carry over to his boxing career. Today, he is undefeated at 13-0 with 10 knockouts and holds the Junior NABF title belt, the first Atlantic City native to achieve this since 2012. Despite his success in the ring, he remains committed to the Beach Patrol, returning to work immediately after winning his title. Known as “Mr. Atlantic City,” Figueroa exemplifies dedication, teamwork, and hometown pride, serving as an inspiration to colleagues and the community alike.



Photo courtesy of: www.fightersfirst.com

Atlantic City Police Department

Training & Equipment



Members of the Atlantic City Police Department, along with personnel from partner jurisdictions, completed an intensive week-long hostage negotiation course at the Emergency Operations Center. The training strengthened critical skills for managing high-stakes situations and emphasized safe, effective crisis response. Key components included:

- Crisis and Hostage Negotiation: Techniques for managing high-stakes situations and safely resolving hostage incidents.
- Crisis Intervention: Approaches to support individuals in distress and prevent escalation.
- De-escalation Scenarios: Hands-on exercises simulating tense encounters to practice calming and resolving conflicts.
- Crisis Communication Principles: Core strategies for effective, clear, and professional communication during emergencies.

This training equips officers with the skills necessary to protect the community while handling high-risk situations safely and professionally.



Atlantic City Fire Department

Spotlight on Service

On October 22, 2025, ALS Medic 6 was dispatched to Ohio Avenue in Atlantic City for a male patient experiencing a possible overdose and altered mental status. Upon arrival, the patient was highly altered, and ACFD personnel, working alongside EMS providers, quickly assisted in moving him from a small residence to a safer area where he could be better assessed.

Once outside, the patient's condition rapidly deteriorated—he lost consciousness and pulse, creating a life-threatening situation. The crew immediately moved him to a stretcher, initiated CPR, and managed a difficult airway while loading him into the ambulance. Throughout this intense response, Station 3 personnel also supported the patient's family, providing reassurance during a highly stressful moment.

Special recognition goes to ACFD Firefighter Kirsten Pruitt who voluntarily performed high-quality chest compressions for six critical minutes, allowing the EMS team to establish a Lucas device and manage the airway effectively. Her initiative, skill, and dedication exemplify the professionalism and commitment of Atlantic City Fire Department personnel.

The Medic 6 crew commends the entire Station 3 crew for their rapid, coordinated response, exceptional teamwork, and unwavering dedication. Their decisive actions in this high-stakes EMS call made a critical difference and highlight the extraordinary skill and professionalism of Atlantic City's first responders.



Atlantic City Police Department

Spotlight on Service

On October 18, 2025, Officers Matthew Stanwood and Nicholas Timek were assigned to the Special Investigations Section to follow up on multiple complaints involving establishments selling alcohol, tobacco, and THC products to individuals under the legal purchasing age. While working undercover, the officers were able to buy THC and vape products from one business, and they were also permitted entry and served alcohol in a bar/restaurant. These encounters confirmed several violations and provided clear, actionable evidence.

Throughout the assignment, Officers Stanwood and Timek demonstrated strong investigative skills, sound judgment, and professionalism in sensitive situations. Their ability to maintain their undercover roles and gather credible information was essential in addressing community concerns and promoting public safety. Both officers are deserving of commendation for their effort, integrity, and teamwork during this investigation.



This Month in Pictures



Veronica Munford and volunteers from Victory First Presbyterian Church have fed firefighters at Station 3 every first Saturday of November for four years to show appreciation for first responders.



Members of the Atlantic City Beach Patrol participated in this year's Seedorf-McMeekin 5K Run. Congratulations to our medalists: Olivia Herbert, Summer Stevenson, Eleni Smith, Steph Auble, and Michelle Burwell.

Photo courtesy of AC Beach Patrol Facebook Page



A Message from the Police Chief

Chief's Corner

I remain incredibly proud of the men and women of the Atlantic City Police Department who come to work each and every day ready, eager, and able to serve this community. Whether they're responding to calls for help, working with residents to solve problems, or taking the extra step to make a difference in someone's life, they do it all while living our core values of integrity, respect, service, and fairness.

Our officers and civilian staff continue to rise to the occasion time and time again. Their dedication to keeping Atlantic City safe and building positive relationships with the people we serve is what truly sets this department apart.

It remains my greatest honor to lead such an extraordinary group of professionals who take pride in their work and in this city. I thank them for their service, their sacrifice, and their unwavering commitment to making Atlantic City a better place every single day.

Chief James Sarkos



Atlantic City Police Department

Spotlight on Service

On Saturday, September 20, 2025, Officers G. Robinson and A. Torres responded to a report of a male attempting to steal a vehicle. Upon arrival, they made contact with the victim, Council President Aaron Randolph, who was present next to his vehicle. Following a brief investigation, the officers apprehended the suspect, who was subsequently charged with Theft of Movable Property and Burglary, both third-degree offenses resulting in a warrant.

Officers Robinson and Torres consistently demonstrate exceptional dedication and professionalism with every shift. Their commitment to serving the community, handling each challenge with care and expertise, does not go unnoticed. Day in and day out, they work tirelessly to ensure the safety and well-being of others, exemplifying the outstanding work ethic and unwavering dedication of the Atlantic City Police Department.



The Atlantic City Police Department, Fire Department, and Beach Patrol are united in their commitment to public safety, service, and community partnership. Together, these departments work tirelessly to protect residents and visitors by preventing and responding to emergencies, providing lifesaving services, and fostering a safe, vibrant city. Through innovation, ongoing training, and strong community engagement, each department upholds the highest standards of professionalism and integrity—ensuring that Atlantic City remains a secure and welcoming place for all.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

- * Thanksgiving Turkey Giveaway**
November 24, 2025 | 11:00AM - 12:00PM

Spread the holiday spirit! Join us for our annual Turkey Giveaway and help ensure local families enjoy a warm and hearty Thanksgiving meal.
- * Annual Smoke Alarm Installation Event**
December 6, 2025

Join us in making our community safer! Volunteers and first responders will team up to install free smoke alarms and share vital fire safety tips with residents.
- * Civilian Academy Graduation/Honors Ceremony**
November 24, 2025 | 3:45PM

Celebrate the achievements of our Civilian Academy graduates as they're recognized for their dedication, growth, and commitment to community partnership.
- * Atlantic City Holiday Parade & Market**
December 13, 2025 | 4:00PM

Come one, come all to Atlantic City's Twilight Christmas Parade & Market! Join the the fun as Atlantic Avenue will light up with music, magic, and holiday cheer!
- * PAL Thanksgiving Dinner**
November 24, 2025 | 5:00PM

Gather with the Police Athletic League for a warm and festive Thanksgiving dinner celebrating community, gratitude, and togetherness.
- * Shop With a Cop**
December 15-17, 2025 | 10:00AM -11:00AM

This annual event pairs local law enforcement with youth for a holiday shopping experience aimed at strengthening community relationships and supporting families in need.

The Public Safety Insider is brought to you by the Public Safety Information Office. Please contact us at MDuffy@acnj.gov with any ideas or suggestions for future newsletters. A very special Thank You to OEM Intern Chelsea Moore for her indispensable work on this inaugural edition. All photographs are credited to Edward Lea unless noted otherwise.