

# Consolidating With Expansion In Mind: *Holbrook's New Regional Emergency Communications Center*

Combining dispatch efforts into one consolidated regional communications center can provide considerable benefits. This kind of partnership allows for the streamlining of operations, the ability to cover a larger area, significant cost savings and the sharing of resources.

The town of Holbrook, Massachusetts became one of the first municipalities to consolidate and regionalize emergency communications. Holbrook partnered with five other towns – Rockland, Sharon, Abington, Canton and Whitman – to provide fire, police and emergency dispatch for Norfolk County and much of eastern Massachusetts. With the help of a team that included All-Comm Technologies, the upgraded Holbrook Regional Emergency Communications Center (HRECC) opened in early 2021.

## Why Upgrade?

Several factors were key to needing the upgrade. The original communications center was small and not built for expansion. Lauren Mielke is the Deputy Director of Communications for the Holbrook RECC. “I think it’s safe to say that as soon as additional partner agencies began to join, the HRECC rapidly began to outgrow the space,” she says.

Space limitations weren’t the only factor that necessitated the upgrade. The technological infrastructure needed to evolve with the demand for space. Mielke goes on to say, “Becoming a regional emergency communications center made us eligible for opportunities to not only construct the facility but to outfit it with top-of-the-line technology as well.”

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– Lauren Mielke,  
Deputy Director of Communications, Holbrook RECC

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## Getting It Done

When it came time to put the plan into action, the HRECC looked to All-Comm. Holbrook and All-Comm have a relationship that goes several years back. “We were initially a maintenance resource for Holbrook,” says Delvis Javier, All-Comm’s Technical Supervisor. “Over time, and our proven track record, we became their primary service provider.”

Mielke adds, “All Comm played an integral role in the pre-planning, design and delivery of high-quality communications systems. They were open and responsive and made sure we were apprised of every step throughout the project. The team at All-Comm are not only trustworthy, hard-working, and dedicated but they are friends of this center. Everyone at All-Comm truly went above and beyond to make sure our needs were met and that we received the highest quality equipment and level of service.”

Groundbreaking took place in September of 2019, not long before the COVID-19 Pandemic reached the U.S. “It was nerve-racking when COVID initially started as there were a lot of unknowns. We saw other active projects cease and we were concerned that the same thing could happen to ours,” explains Mieke. The development team worked together to push through. Remote meetings occurred when necessary and constant email communication made sure everyone remained in the loop.

All-Comm was instrumental in providing radio dispatch equipment and service to the HRECC in addition to helping facilitate the inclusion of Rockland and Abington for fire and police dispatch.

“We helped the HRECC upgrade to the latest Zetron and Tait equipment,” Javier adds. The center now boasts 18 positions;

including Zetron’s MAX Dispatch, MAX Fire Station Alerting, CommandIQ, and several remote laptop workstations.

## High Praise

The center opened in January of 2021. So far, the new HRECC has greatly improved response times and services. It has also become a shining model for other communities considering consolidation.

“This facility was designed with the dispatchers in mind,” Mielke boasts. “They’re taking these high priority calls. The least we could do was make sure they’re comfortable here. The workstations are all ergonomically correct. They’re adjustable if needed. It helps keep them comfortable in their work environment.”

William Smith, Holbrook’s Chief of Police, gives the center high praise. “They did a fantastic job. If you saw the center they used to be in, they were sitting on top of each other. It’s a huge asset to have this center and the way it’s presented.”

According to Stephan Hooke, HRECC’s Director of Communications, the new center is running at about 50% of its full potential. “It was built with expansion in mind,” he says. “We plan on adding additional communities as time goes on. We’re already in discussion with several.”

“There are a lot of things to be proud of about this facility,” Mielke comments. Management at the top, including Director Hooke, “has put more time, effort, energy and passion than anyone else that I know. That’s something to be proud of.”



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