

# Newsletter

May 2022

[Share with a friend!](#)

Volume 6, Edition 5



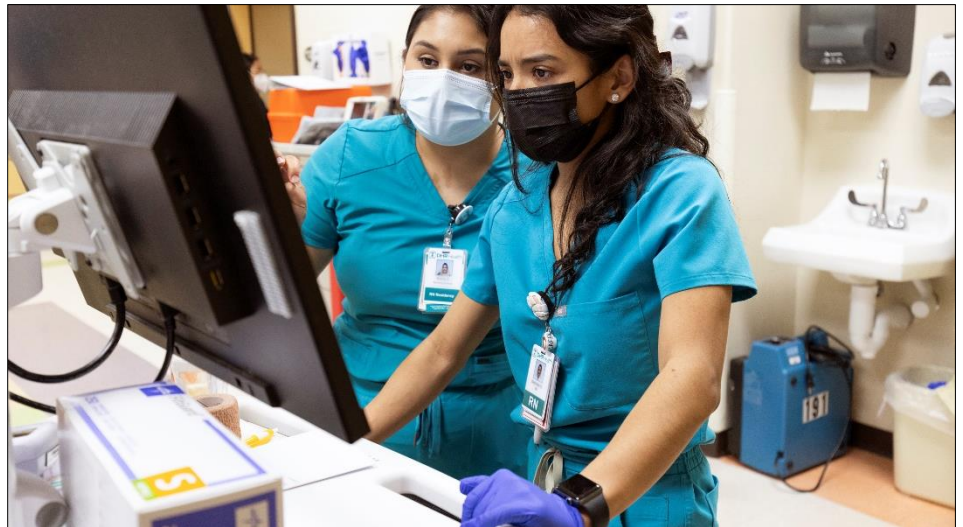
## Connecting N.M. first responders battling wildfires

ALBUQUERQUE — FirstNet, Built with AT&T is providing public safety agencies and first responders battling the Calf Canyon-Hermit's Peak and Cerro Pelado fires with the critical communications they need, deploying dedicated portable network assets from the FirstNet fleet. [READ MORE ON PAGE 3](#)

## RESPONDER WELLNESS

### Making mindfulness a part of your everyday

"Responders have a direct line to what is happening in the community. We don't get the call because people are having a great time. And we witness the worst of human experience," says Rhonda Kelly, Executive Director of the All Clear Foundation. Read why it's important for first responders to practice mindfulness. [READ MORE, PAGE 2](#)



## DHR Health: Connectivity critical for patient outcome

Staying connected – to first responders on the scene and to each other – is critical to patient outcome. Hear how DHR Health's doctors and nurses are using FirstNet to communicate with EMS, fire, and law enforcement for better patient care. [WATCH VIDEO](#)

## Trauma care starts when first responders arrive on the scene

**By Dr. Jeffrey Skubic**

Trauma Medical Director, DHR Health

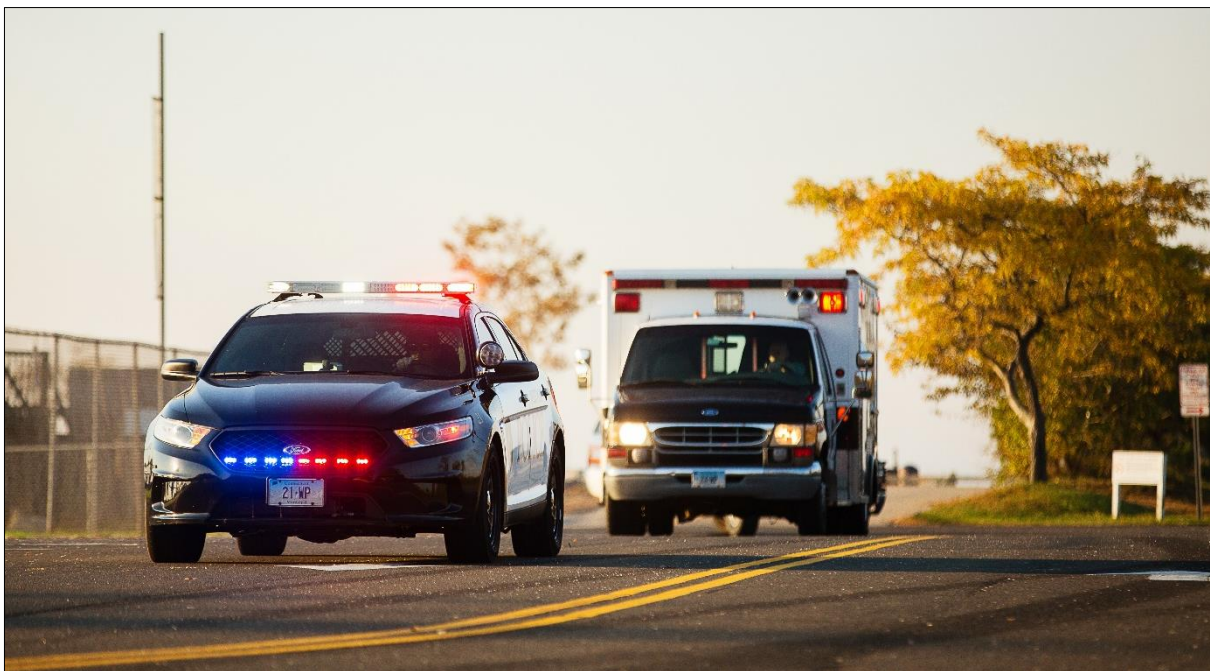
Trauma care doesn't really start when the patient hits the door here at DHR Health. It starts when emergency medical services – the pre-hospital providers like EMTs, paramedics, fire departments, police officers – arrive at the scene. That's when trauma care starts. And their communication with each other and with us is incredibly important so that we know what's coming in before they get here. [READ MORE ON PAGE 4](#)



# RESPONDER HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## Making mindfulness a part of your everyday operations

*Mindfulness practices – whether that's yoga, meditation, snowboarding, mountain biking, walking, fishing, or other – allow us to drop the pressures in our lives and focus on what really matters to us.*



### By Rhonda Kelly, BS, RN, Paramedic

Executive Director, All Clear Foundation,

Many in the responder community find **mindfulness** to be irrelevant to their life experience. They see it as a hindrance. But tactical mindfulness is actually an advantage. It enhances performance in our professional and our personal lives.

Responders have a direct line to what is happening in the community. We don't get the call because people are having a great time. And we witness the worst of human experience. Yet, we expect to create a positive outcome. Outcomes are often not under our control. Part of mindfulness is recognizing what we are capable of in the moment and basing our self-evaluation on that. It's not about some unattainable, idealized expectation.

### What is mindfulness

Mindfulness practices – whether that's yoga, meditation, snowboarding, mountain biking, walking, fishing, or other – allow us to drop the pressures in our lives and focus on what really matters to us. You don't need yoga pants or incense to achieve this state. All you need is to absorb yourself in whatever you're doing and reap the rewards in that moment. That could be physical activity, tinkering with something mechanical or appreciating the stillness of nature.

What we do as emergency responders, whether in the field or in the hospital, is demanding and essential. We all possess special skill sets that allow us to do this work. But the culture of our jobs has often told us we need to sacrifice, be martyrs, not care for ourselves. If we can't win every battle, we are weak and don't belong. This is not true.

### Caring for ourselves

We are human and that is the greatest strength we bring to our jobs. We care about others, but we need to take care of ourselves to succeed in our mission, thrive in our lives, and know that we really matter.

When we neglect our needs, our families and friends suffer along with us. These jobs are demanding. It is a select few who can respond to this call. Our mission, along with that of FirstNet®, Built with AT&T is to better support those who support our communities. We see you, salute you, and support you.

At [All Clear Foundation](https://www.allclearfoundation.org/), we offer a wealth of free, vetted tools and resources designed specifically for emergency responders. For more information and tools about mindfulness, check out our YOU|ResponderStrong Wellness Tool at <https://you.responderstrong.org/>. It's available free 24/7 for emergency responders, including healthcare workers and their families. And it is full of

*(Continued on Page 3)*



## RESPONDER HEALTH AND WELLNESS/OTHER NEWS

### Connecting N.M. first responders battling wildfires

ALBUQUERQUE— FirstNet, Built with AT&T is providing public safety agencies and first responders battling the Calf Canyon-Hermit's Peak and Cerro Pelado fires with the critical communications they need. [FirstNet](#) has deployed dedicated portable network assets (SatCOLTs) from the FirstNet fleet to help first responders on the fireground.

The Calf Canyon-Hermit Peak fire has burned nearly 190,000 acres and forced thousands of residents from their homes. FirstNet has deployed SatCOLTs to the Forward Operating Base in Mora. This gives first responders from local, state and federal agencies the unthrottled connectivity they need to communicate [with one another](#).

The Cerro Pelado fire also has burned more than 40,000 acres and is forcing evacuations in the area. At public safety's request, we deployed a dedicated FirstNet SatCOLT to the remote Incident Command Post. This is helping public safety officials on the fireline in the **Jemez Mountains** communicate and coordinate their incident response.

"These fires are devastating and continue to threaten more communities and homes," said Fred Scalera, Director, FirstNet Response Operations, AT&T. "It is critical that first responders have reliable connectivity to better serve their communities in times of crisis like this."

FirstNet also has distributed FirstNet Ready® devices and hotspots to first responders at Incident Command in **Las Vegas** as they head to the frontlines. FirstNet liaisons are coordinating with the State Emergency Operations Center. And they're ready to deploy additional assets to



*Like other first responders, correctional officers face major occupational stressors, such as mandatory overtime, lack of schedule flexibility (due to high the ongoing wildfires. Only FirstNet has dedicated assets, available at no additional charge to FirstNet users, to give fire, EMS, law enforcement and more the connectivity they need. This includes in the aftermath of a wildfire or during a commercial power disruption.*

The dedicated deployable network assets help keep first responders on FirstNet connected to the information they need. This allows them to make rescues, communicate and coordinate their emergency response, or aid in recovery, even in the hardest hit areas or most remote parts of the country.

Go to [FirstNet.com](https://www.firstnet.com) to learn more about America's public safety network.

©2022 AT&T Intellectual Property. FirstNet and the FirstNet logo are registered trademarks and service marks of the First Responder Network Authority. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.

### Making mindfulness a part of your everyday operations

*(Continued from Page 2)*

vetted content to support mindfulness and overall well-being. Together we are stronger.

*Rhonda Kelly served in emergency response for more than 20 years, working as an EMT, paramedic, firefighter, and registered nurse. In 2016, she founded ResponderStrong, a collaborative initiative to build better mental health support for responders and their families. In 2020, she and ResponderStrong joined the All Clear Foundation where she now serves as Executive Director.*

©AT&T Intellectual Property. FirstNet and the FirstNet logo are registered

trademarks and service marks of the First Responder Network Authority. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.

<sup>1</sup>Christopher MS, Goerling RJ, Rogers BS, Hunsinger MH, Baron G, Bergman A, & Zava DT (2016). A pilot study of evaluating the effectiveness of a mindfulness-based intervention on cortisol awakening response and health outcomes among law enforcement officers. *Journal of Police and Criminal Psychology* 31(1):15-28. doi: 10.1007/s11896-015-9161-x

<sup>2</sup>Westphal, M., Bingisser, M. B., Feng, T., Wall, M., Blakley, E., Bingisser, R., & Kleim, B. (2015). Protective benefits of mindfulness in emergency room personnel. *Journal of affective disorders*, 175, 79-85. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jad.2014.12.038>

<sup>3</sup>Kaplan, J. B., Bergman, A. L., Christopher, M., Bowen, S., & Hunsinger, M. (2017). ROLE OF RESILIENCE IN MINDFULNESS TRAINING FOR FIRST RESPONDERS. *Mindfulness*, 8(5), 1373-1380. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-017-0713-2>



### Connectivity for COVID patients and vaccination sites during pandemic

During the Covid-19 pandemic, medical facilities grappled with communications needs they'd not had before. See and hear how DHR Health used FirstNet to help fill those needs.

[WATCH VIDEO](#)

## For trauma medical director, trauma care starts when first responders arrive at the scene

*(Continued from Page 1)*

That's why we're on FirstNet®.

DHR Health is the largest health system in south Texas. We are a full tertiary, academic, level one trauma center, the only level one trauma center south of San Antonio – for about 250 miles.

Many times, EMS chiefs will call me right from the scene. "Hey, we got this bad car wreck. The patient looks like they have a broken leg. They can't breathe. They're going to need to be intubated."

They tell me while they're on the way here and we have time to prepare. Care really starts from the time of the accident and the first arrival of pre-hospital providers. Their communication with us is so important. And it's important that we have strong communication that doesn't go down; communication that works in rural areas because we're covering such a large part of south Texas.

### A typical day

A typical day for me as a trauma surgeon starts about 7 in the morning – 6:30 on Mondays. We get sign-out from the overnight surgeon, who sleeps in the hospital with the

rest of the team. Then we start ICU rounds in the intensive care unit on the sickest trauma patients.

As traumas come in, we have to stop what we're doing, report to the emergency department immediately and evaluate the trauma patients. Then we have to determine whether to send them to the operating room, the ICU or to the floor. Or we have to decide if we can discharge them.

As soon as we take care of that patient, we go back to whatever we were doing. It's basically a day of constant interruptions as traumas come in.

### Communication is critical

The kind of traumas we see at a level one trauma center are anything from elderly falls to motor vehicle accidents, to ATV rollovers, all the way up to stab wounds and gunshot wounds.

So the kind of communication needs we have as a trauma team are huge.

Many times I'll get a call directly from the local EMS chiefs – or the highest-ranking person on scene. They'll call and tell me, "We've got a house fire here. We've got five people. They're really burned. We're going to be bringing them into you soon." So we can be ready and be able to absorb a large number of patients at one time.

In a mass casualty event like that, communication

*(Continued on Page 5)*

***“FirstNet is important because it allows EMS providers, hospital personnel – all of that network – to stay connected, no matter what happens.”***  
**– Dr. Jeffrey Skubic**

*(Continued from Page 4)*

becomes so important because you're not just getting one patient. You may get eight or nine. For instance, last August we had a mass casualty event in Encino, Texas, about 50 miles north of here. A large van carrying about 30 people flipped over. Ten people died on the scene and 20 patients needed to go to trauma centers.

The paramedics and EMTs were calling the trauma directors at all the different hospitals to get ready. We got about 8 patients at once from that event.

I had to call in some trauma surgeons because we have a mass casualty protocol here. We had multiple trauma surgeons arrive for that event. And we had eight or nine of our surgical residents all in the trauma bay before those patients started to arrive. The second they arrived, we had the room fully staffed.

## **A picture worth a thousand words**

But I don't just get phone calls. Sometimes I'll get videos and pictures from the scene.

EMS providers may send me pictures of a car wreck where a telephone pole has crashed on top of the car. They send that to me to emphasize how much energy the patient may have absorbed and how much damage their vehicle took.

As a trauma surgeon I'm always trying to evaluate how much energy the patient absorbed. And getting pictures or video from the scene is very helpful. They'll bring a patient in who was in a high-speed motor vehicle collision. And they'll send me pictures of the vehicle and it's barely damaged. Airbags didn't deploy. It didn't flip over. So when I'm evaluating that patient, that tells me this is probably more of a low energy mechanism.

On the flip side, paramedics sent me a picture of a head on collision that crunched in the entire front end of the car. I'm already thinking, "Prepare for this patient." This was a high energy mechanism. And the video or pictures of the vehicle clue me into what kind of injury they could have.

They did enough damage to completely crumple the front of the car. That can create what's called a deceleration injury. That's when a human body is moving at a speed and comes to a sudden stop. And that can



*As a trauma surgeon, Dr. Skubic says he's always trying to evaluate how much energy the patient absorbed in a trauma accident. Getting pictures or video from the scene is very helpful, he adds.*

cause organ damage internally. The big thing I'm looking for in a deceleration injury is a great vessel injury – an aortic injury.

That's something we may not look for because we may not see that on our x-rays and our ultrasound. Having that image and knowing what happened, I can send the patient for a CT scan so I can see the aorta.

## **Why FirstNet**

FirstNet is important because it allows EMS providers, hospital personnel – all of that network – to stay connected, no matter what happens. In a hurricane storm or in a mass casualty event, when a lot of people are using their cell phones, you may not be able to get a signal or call out.

Having a separate network allows us to maintain open communications no matter what happens. If we don't have communication with each other, we're going to have a real big problem.

For me, it's more about when we have those bad events: the bad car wreck, the shooting, the house fires, the mass casualty events. That's where FirstNet is so important. When you have terrible events or events that may light up the cell phone network and you can't call out – just like 9/11. I'm from the New York area, so I was there when that happened. I couldn't get signal, couldn't do anything. It was hard to call anybody.

*(Continued on Page 6)*



### ***“Trauma care starts when first responders arrive at the scene”***

*(Continued from Page 5)*

FirstNet is here so that, no matter what, the first responders, the EMS pre-hospital providers, the hospitals, can still communicate. For me, that's what it's all about.

If you show up with 10 severe burn patients right without calling me ahead of time – or sending me videos or footage of what they look like before they get here – it's going to be hard to prepare. No matter how good of a hospital you are, it's going to be hard to be ready for that. Communication is so important to be able to take care of patients in emergency situations, which is what I deal with all day.

#### **Timing is everything**

The golden hour of trauma is so important because we estimate it's about an hour from when the incident happens to be able to get hemorrhage control. Meaning if a patient is bleeding, you have about an hour to get in there and stop the bleeding.

FirstNet provides rapid communication, stable communication that I know is going to work. That allows us to get that information. So, if I know they're coming and they're able to communicate with me that the patient's bleeding badly, we already have the whole blood hanging in the room. I have all the equipment out next to the bed before they arrive. We can open the patient, give them blood, whatever they need, but that's all time dependent.

Not having that good pre-hospital communication that FirstNet provides would be catastrophic to taking care of patients. We have to have information.

#### **Connectivity where you need it**

Finally, as a trauma medical director, I have to be reachable 24/7/365. And FirstNet provides that strong connection. We're in an urban area. But just 20 miles north of here, it becomes very rural. FirstNet gives us the freedom as physicians to leave that area and still have a strong connection.

The trauma surgeon on call may need to get a hold of me at 3 in the morning. And I'm going to have to connect and look at x-rays or whatever it is – wherever I am.

Having FirstNet has allowed us to have the stronger connection to all our pre-hospital providers. For me, that's such a big part of my job. If you work in trauma or



**Dr. Jeffrey Skubic** is the Trauma Medical Director at DHR Health in Edinburg, Texas, the largest health system in south Texas – and the only level one trauma center south of San Antonio. He is board certified by the American Board of Surgery in both surgical critical Care and general surgery, and specializes in trauma surgery, emergency general surgery and surgical critical care.

Dr. Skubic is part of the Rio Grande Valley's largest and most comprehensive surgical team, offering patients the latest in trauma surgical treatment and technology. He earned his Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine and Master of Science in Musculoskeletal Medicine at New York College of Osteopathic Medicine of New York Institute of Technology, Old Westbury, New York.

He completed his general surgery residency at the University of Arizona College of Medicine in Phoenix, Arizona. That's where he found a passion in trauma surgery and decided to attend Harvard University (The Brigham and Women's Hospital) to pursue a fellowship in acute care surgery/critical care.

emergency surgery or emergency medicine, I recommend they look into it and see if they can get it at their hospital system.

People think physicians are only in the hospital. They don't realize that I probably know every police chief, EMS provider in all of south Texas here. We go to meetings together. We constantly try to improve our pre-hospital care. And most of our meetings focus on communication.

©2022 AT&T Intellectual Property. FirstNet and the FirstNet logo are registered trademarks and service marks of the First Responder Network Authority. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.

## OTHER NEWS



*"Tribal gaming facilities play a key role in Tribal emergency operations, including providing safe lodging to tribal elders and members of the tribal community in response to natural disasters, ranging from wildfires, flooding, snowstorms and other natural disasters," said Ernie Stevens Jr., Chairman and National Spokesperson for the Indian Gaming Association.*

### **Indian Gaming Association, FirstNet Authority and FirstNet Program at AT&T launch collaborative effort for communications**

*FirstNet adoption within Tribal Gaming Enterprises in Indian Country to transform security, collaboration with first responders, emergency response*

Washington, DC, May 25, 2022 – The Indian Gaming Association is working with the First Responder Network Authority (FirstNet Authority) and the FirstNet Program at AT&T to raise awareness among its members about the benefits of [FirstNet®](#). The inter-tribal association, which focuses on economic self-sufficiency through gaming and community development, would like to raise awareness about the impact FirstNet can have on public safety communications throughout Indian Country.

"With tens of millions of visitors at Indian gaming enterprises each year, the need for dedicated, interoperable connectivity for public safety personnel and those supporting emergency response is critical to

further enhance security and emergency operations throughout Indian Country," said Ernie Stevens Jr., Chairman and National Spokesperson for the Indian Gaming Association. "Tribal gaming facilities play a key role in Tribal emergency operations, including providing safe lodging to tribal elders and members of the tribal community in response to natural disasters, ranging from wildfires, flooding, snowstorms and other natural disasters.

"We are excited the FirstNet Program at AT&T is joining our Association to provide our members with the valuable tools and resources they require to stay mission ready and better serve the visitors and tribal communities where tribal gaming enterprises operate," he added.

FirstNet, Built with AT&T is designed to help public safety entities and those supporting emergency response improve interoperable communications. This allows first responders to communicate with one another easily and quickly during everyday situations and big events or [emergencies](#). And this is vital to solving the communications challenges public safety and emergency operations personnel have experienced in the past at gaming facilities.

"The tragic mass shooting at the Route 91 Harvest music festival in Las Vegas underscored the criticality of communication and coordination between first responders and those supporting emergency response at gaming facilities," Stevens said. "The Association membership is committed to creating a safe environment for visitors,

*(Continued on Page 8)*

## OTHER NEWS

### Launching collaborative effort for public safety communications

(Continued from Page 7)

employees and the broader tribal community. FirstNet is a tool to help our tribal gaming enterprises work with law enforcement and other first responders to address health and safety concerns, ranging from drug and human trafficking to response to medical emergencies. We are proud of our members' longstanding commitment to being part of the solution."

FirstNet will help support the Association's nearly 200 membership tribes as they look to provide the best security and emergency response capabilities and communications for their public safety and local first responders. This is the next step in creating a more cohesive bond between FirstNet and tribal first responder communications.

"We're honored that the Indian Gaming Association is promoting best practices and raising awareness among its members about FirstNet as a critical tool to elevate public safety communications capabilities," said Angel Benally, Tribal Affairs Specialist, FirstNet Program at AT&T. "It's our mission to give the entire public safety community the cutting-edge tools they need to safely and effectively achieve their mission. FirstNet will help gaming enterprises and the public safety community in Indian Country perform at the highest levels of emergency readiness to help keep themselves and those they serve out of harm's way."

"FirstNet is the exclusive communications platform, built with and for public safety," said Jeremy Zollo, Chief Market Engagement Officer, FirstNet Authority. "The FirstNet Authority works hand-in-hand with Tribal government leaders and first responders who safeguard Indian country. Together, through the FirstNet Authority's Tribal Working Group, we are dedicated to ensuring FirstNet delivers what they need, when they need it."

In October 2019, Stevens and other Tribal gaming and public safety stakeholders gained hands-on experience with FirstNet during a FirstNet Tribal Showcase and Training Exercise hosted by the Southern California

*"FirstNet is the exclusive communications platform, built with and for public safety. The FirstNet Authority works hand-in-hand with Tribal government leaders and first responders who safeguard Indian country. Together, through the FirstNet Authority's Tribal Working Group, we are dedicated to ensuring FirstNet delivers what they need, when they need it."*

**Jeremy Zollo**

Chief Market Engagement Officer  
FirstNet Authority

Tribal Emergency Management group at the Morongo Band of Mission Indians. Similar Tribal FirstNet Executive Forum & Showcases were recently held in early April 2022 and hosted by the La Jolla Bands of Luiseño Indians and the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians.

FirstNet, Built with AT&T and the FirstNet Authority will collaborate with Association member Nations and public safety stakeholders to identify and promote best practices for implementing FirstNet in Indian Country to serve public safety and casino security communications and coordination. The Association will share findings and best practices at future Association meetings and events.

Visit <http://www.indiangaming.org> to learn more about the Indian Gaming Association. Go [here](#) for more FirstNet news. To learn more about FirstNet, check out [www.firstnet.com](http://www.firstnet.com). To learn more about the FirstNet Authority, check out <https://www.firstnet.gov>.

@2022 AT&T. FirstNet and the FirstNet logo are registered trademarks and service marks of the First Responder Network Authority. All other marks are the property of their respective owners.