

Lancaster County Emergency Services



State of Emergency Services—2017

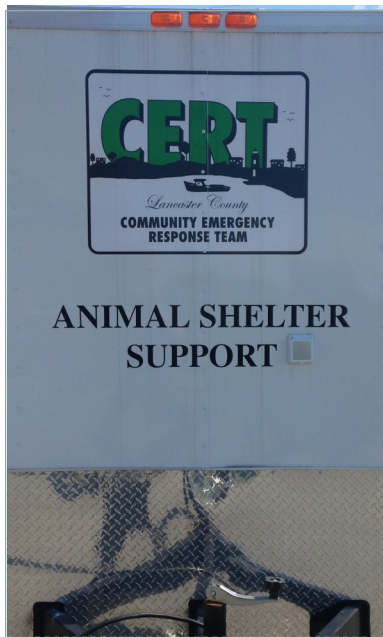
SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

Day-to-day, Lancaster County Emergency Services is responsible for providing emergency medical services personnel, to staff the volunteer rescue squads and advanced life support response unit. This agreement, in place since 2004, ensures that ambulance crews are available to respond to emergencies 24/7.

Today, the Department of Emergency Services provides 576 hours of staffing per week, to ensure a timely response, whether with a volunteer crew, or a career crew—in some cases, the crew is staffed with a combination of career and volunteer personnel.

In addition to this day-to-day role, the department is responsible for emergency management and hazardous materials response, for Lancaster County. This responsibility includes planning for emergencies, coordinating response and recovery efforts with other public safety agencies and county departments, in addition to working with town, state and federal agencies, on behalf of Lancaster County. Much effort is also spent on community education and outreach, helping to ensure a resilient community.





COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

The Lancaster County Emergency Response Team (CERT), is a federal Citizen Corps program, sponsored locally by Lancaster County Emergency Response Team. The purpose of the CERT program in Lancaster County, is to support county staff and public safety agencies, with trained volunteers, to provide a variety of services during an emergency or disaster. Examples of such services may include: emergency shelter and feeding, pet shelter support, firefighter rehab, damage assessment, and search and rescue. Non-emergency functions of the CERT program may include activities to support fundraising efforts by volunteer fire and rescue

departments, and support for community events, with parking, safety monitoring, and communications.

On May 6, 2017, Lancaster CERT graduated a class of 14 students, with an additional cohort of 15 scheduled to graduate on May 11, 2017. These volunteers are a valuable asset to Lancaster County, and contribute greatly to community resilience and response capacity.



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DECLINING VOLUNTEERISM

A common problem for volunteer fire and EMS agencies across the United States, is a lack of trained volunteers. Lancaster County is no exception, prompting the creation of the Department of Emergency Services, in 2004, to supplement rescue squad volunteers. Since the beginning of this arrangement, the need for staffing has increased from 80 to 576 hours per week. Although the number of paid hours has increased dramatically, it has remained stable since 2012. The volunteer rescue squads are generally able to provide their required staffing; however, occasionally they struggle to fully staff their crews, requiring the County to provide paid personnel. Since July 1, 2016, this has occurred on 11 occasions, resulting in 111 hours of unscheduled staffing. LCES continues to work with the rescue squads to help address recruiting and retention needs, including training.

GROWTH IN DEMAND FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

Since 2009, year-to-year growth in demand for service has increased by an average of 8.22%. For CY 2009, Lancaster County Emergency Services responded to 815 calls, compared to 1411 calls for CY 2016. Thus far for 2017, we are on track for increased demand with a projected call volume just under 1500 calls.

Although the demand for EMS has increased, a corresponding increase in revenue has not been realized. Overall, reimbursement rates have decreased from public and private payers. There continues to be difficult in collecting revenue from self-pay patients, although many of those persons qualify for payment relief, according to local ordinance.

Although the total population of Lancaster County continues to decline, the median age of the population has been increasing.

Year	Call Volume
2016	1411
2015	1329
2014	1203
2013	1071
2012	1010
2011	885
2010	850
2009	815

Based on the age of the population, and demographic trends, it is expected that there will continue to be an increase in the need for EMS.

The volunteer rescue squads have generally seen a similar increase in the demand for service. Despite the increase in call volume, staffing levels have remained

stagnant since 2012. There is not a current need for additional hours of coverage, however, if trends continue, it is reasonable that an additional crew will be needed, during daytime hours, within the next five years.



TRENDS IN EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

As the nation’s healthcare system evolves from a fee-for-service model to a more patient-centered, value-driven and outcomes-based model, EMS as we know it today is positioned to change. The Institute of Healthcare Improvement triple aim of improving the patient care experience, improving population health, and reducing the cost of healthcare, are being applied throughout the healthcare system. The current EMS delivery model is inefficient and expensive. In order to achieve better value for the cost of service, EMS is uniquely positioned to engage in community-based programs to improve health, while reducing the overall cost of healthcare. While the payment for such services is not yet defined, prototype programs across the nation have demonstrated success with innovative interventions and reimbursement models.

As these programs demonstrate success and payment models evolve to reflect greater efficiency and improvement in healthcare, payers are likely to drive change in the healthcare system. This may result in an increase in the services provided by EMS systems, which will complement other partners across the continuum of care, shifting investment from existing programs, to programs that demonstrate better efficiency and better success. Areas in which EMS systems may begin participating in more integrative healthcare include: urgent medical intervention, preventative evaluation and care, chronic disease management, post-discharge follow-up and care, and transport to destinations other than emergency departments.

While these changes deviate from the current model of emergency medical services, they are reflective of a changing healthcare landscape, where increasing costs are resulting in more restrictive services. Innovative approaches to address the medical and wellness needs of communities will require a more collaborative effort across the spectrum of healthcare services. New models for payment or services will have to be developed to address these shifting service responsibilities. While much remains undetermined, and changes are not imminent, Lancaster County Emergency Services remains engaged in the conversation, ensuring the interests of Lancaster County and similar communities are considered. In anticipation of potential change, we are taking inventory capabilities, and evaluating the financial impact of change, such that those concerns can be addressed through regulation or through payer demands for service *before* change occurs, rather than reacting to a change.

GRANT PROJECTS

Since 2013, Lancaster County Emergency Services has participated in local or regional grant projects, receiving more than \$800,000 for local and regional projects. These projects have improved the quality of emergency medical care, and the emergency response capabilities of Lancaster County and the Northern Neck.

Grant projects include:

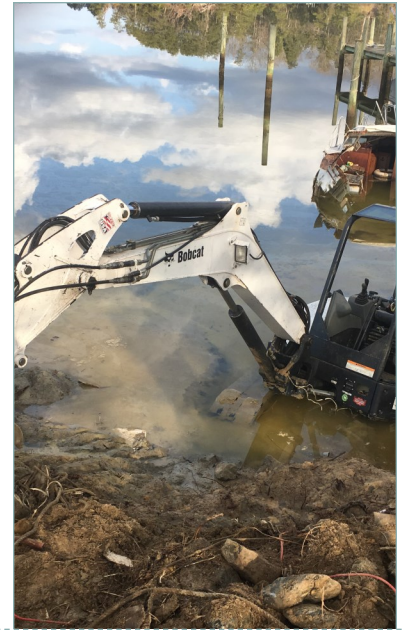
- Emergency Medical Dispatch
- Amateur Radio Communications
- Emergency Shelter Capacity
- Pet Shelter Capacity
- Improved Cardiac Care Equipment
- Citizens Corps Training and Equipment
- EMS Personal Protective Equipment
- Regional Tiered Evacuation
- Emergency GIS Data Enhancement and Exchange
- Points of Distribution
- Emergency Operations Plan Gap Analysis and Regional Integration
- Hazard Mitigation Planning
- Regional Sheltering
- EMS Training for EMT Initial Training and Continuing Education
- E911 Enhancement
- Regional Disaster Debris Management and Reduction

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Lancaster County Emergency Services provides speakers for public groups on a variety of topics related to public health, emergency medical care and emergency preparedness. These requests may be accommodated by administrative or field personnel, whichever is appropriate. Whenever possible, LCES includes the volunteer fire departments and/or rescue squads in these requests.

Topics covered in community events in the past year include: hands-only CPR, emergency planning and preparedness, CERT Basic Academy, animal response and pet sheltering, and amateur radio demonstrations.

These events provide the opportunity to educate the community on the value and capability invested in Lancaster County Emergency Services. Additionally, we are afforded the opportunity to help residents become better prepared and more resilient to emergencies. More resilient communities are better able to recover from disaster, resulting in decreased economic and fiscal impact.



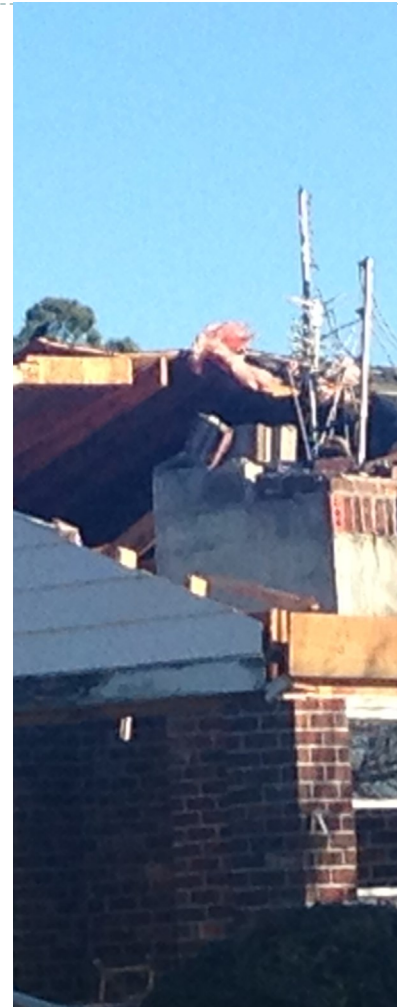
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SHARPENING THE EDGE

Lancaster County Emergency Services is committed to providing the best possible service in all areas of responsibility. To ensure this commitment to quality, the department highly values training for its personnel. Much of this training is provided, in-house, by LCES personnel qualified to teach the various courses. Some training has been obtained by sending personnel to outside agencies, generally at minimal cost, by taking advantage of state and/or federal training programs. In most cases, training costs are provided by LCES; however, some personnel have demonstrated initiative by taking training on their own. In the past year, the following training achievements have been met by LCES personnel:

- National Emergency Management Basic Academy—Terrence McGregor and Heather Brown
- National Fire Academy EMS Management Program—Matthew Smith* and Seth Craig
- EMT Initial Certification Course—provided to rescue squad personnel
- Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support—multiple personnel
- Pediatric Education for Prehospital Providers—multiple personnel
- Geriatric Education for Emergency Medical Services—multiple personnel
- Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support—multiple personnel
- Advanced Medical Life Support*—multiple personnel
- Evacuation and Re-entry Planning—Terrence McGregor and Heather Brown
- Virginia EMS Symposium—multiple personnel
- Tactical Emergency Casualty Care—multiple personnel

*training scheduled before June 30, 2017



**LANCASTER COUNTY
EMERGENCY SERVICES**



OUR PEOPLE MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

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