

MEDICAL SUPPORT OF FLOOD RESCUE OPERATIONS

Definitions

Medical Rescue – Recovery from a flooded area of a person with an acute medical condition which represents an immediate threat to life, limb or organ.

Pre-hospital Stabilization Site (PHSS) – Stationary sites which are ALS capable and act as a rapid drop off point for rescue vehicles carrying patients who may need additional medical evaluation. These sites should be proximal to rescue vehicle staging sites whenever possible. (In the event of water rescue and air rescue drop points being widely separate, two PHSS may be operational. These sites will stabilize and triage patients for transport to the nearest appropriate medical facility.

Identification of Persons Needing Medical Rescue

Requests for acute medical assistance will come through 911. The local rescue center would make the determination of priority.

Medical Rescue Response

The Rescue Center would

1. Determine
 - a. Necessity of medical rescue;
 - b. Special equipment or resources required (e.g., spine stabilization, vehicle extraction);
 - c. Whether a paramedic or EMT needs to accompany the rescue team;
 - d. Rescue priority if more than one medical rescue is in queue;
2. Contact the nearest vehicle triage site if a paramedic or EMT needs to accompany rescuers on the mission. In no area vehicle staging site is available, local EMS or, as last resort, local PHSS may provide the personnel. The Rescue Center will coordinate the addition of paramedic or EMT, with needed equipment, to the rescue team (i.e., movement of EMS personnel assigned the rescue vehicle staging area). If frequent need for EMS rescue staffing is anticipated or if the source of such personnel is quite distant from the rescue vehicle staging area, a paramedic or EMT may need to be stationed at the rescue vehicle staging area with needed equipment¹.
3. Contact the rescue vehicle staging area to alert them to the mission and special equipment needs for the medical rescue. For some rescue missions a brief delay in mission may be necessary to ensure that a paramedic or EMT and all needed equipment are loaded on the mission vehicle.

Disposition of Medical Rescue Patient

When a person who required medical rescue has been recovered, the recovery team will drop both patient and EMS personnel at a designated drop point to be transferred to a PHSS, or in some cases, directly to a hospital².

¹ Additional EMS material is cached in a trailer in the lead city for each of the eight state regions. An on-scene incident commander or local EOC can notify state radio to activate a designated person to retrieve the trailer and take it to the site of need.

² In some scenarios it is possible that an air rescue vehicle may transport directly to a helipad at a regional hospital.