



On Duty

EMSC developing protocol registry

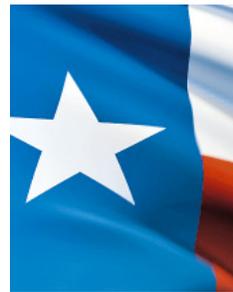
The Emergency Medical Services for Children (EMSC) State Partnership is developing a pediatric protocol repository as part of its mission to reduce morbidity and mortality resulting from severe illness or trauma. EMSC will make the repository available online as a resource for EMS providers and medical directors. The protocol repository will be organized by category and contributing agencies' identities will not be revealed. Contact Anthony Gilchrest, BS, EMT-P, at (832) 824-6028 (office) or by email at adgilchr@texaschildrens.org. The goals of EMSC are to ensure state-of-the-art emergency medical care for the ill or injured child or adolescent is available when needed; ensure that pediatric services are well integrated into the existing state emergency medical services system; and ensure that the entire spectrum of emergency services, including primary prevention of illness and injury, acute care, and rehabilitation, is provided to children and adolescents at the same level as adults. The grant is coordinated through the Baylor College of Medicine and is on the web at www.bcm.edu/pediatrics/emsc.

Quick Fact

According to research conducted by the NREMT, EMTs dissatisfied with their current assignment were significantly more likely to report back problems, as were EMTs reporting good or fair fitness when compared to excellent fitness.



July deadline for Star of Texas nominations



In 2003, the 78th Texas Legislature passed House Bill 1937, which created the Star of Texas Awards to honor first responders killed or seriously injured while performing their duties as peace officers, firefighters and emergency medical first responders. The law also designated September 11th of every year as Texas First Responders Day. The first Star of Texas awards were presented in 2004 to three Texas first responders, one for each category of first responder: emergency medical, fire and law enforcement. The 79th Texas Legislature amended the original legislation to require awards for each first responder seriously injured or killed after September 1, 2003. To be eligible for consideration for this year's awards, the critical incident must have occurred between September 1, 2003 and June 30, 2010, and the individual must have not previously received a Star of Texas Award. Nominations for this year's awards may be submitted no later than July 31, 2010. The awards ceremony will be held in the fall of 2010. To nominate an individual for a Star of Texas Award, please fill out the form at http://governor.state.tx.us/cjd/star_awards.

Moving? Let DSHS know

Having an up-to-date address in the DSHS database is critical if you want to receive recertification and other important information in a timely manner. And if you're a magazine subscriber, the post office will **not** forward *Texas EMS Magazine* if you have moved. Changing your address is simple. Go to www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/Address_Name_Change.pdf, fill out the form and fax it to us. You will not receive a new card; you are still legal with your old card. When you recertify, your card will have the new address. If you want a new card, use the change-of-address form to request a replacement card/certificate for \$10. And you should separately provide your address change to the National Registry of EMTs (NREMT). Contact NREMT at www.nremt.org/nremt/EMTServices/addr_change_verify.asp.



Send in your EMS Awards nominations

Tell us about the best in EMS and trauma! We've posted the award nomination form and an explanation of each category on our website at www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/10AwardsIntroduction.shtm. Save the Microsoft Word document to your computer and fill it out by clicking in the gray areas beside each question. Include examples of why this person or organization should win. Please be specific. Keep in mind that the people who review the nominations most likely won't be as familiar with your nominee as you are.

When you finish, save the file and email it back to EMSAwards@dshs.state.tx.us.

Send the file to us by email no later than October 8, 2010. The packets are then distributed to the OEMS/TS and sent to each EMS compliance group. Each program and compliance service group ranks the nominations for each category and returns the information to the OEMS/TS, where scores are tallied. Scores are kept confidential from all except those who tally the scores. Winners are announced at the Awards Luncheon at Texas EMS Conference in Austin.

Award Categories 2010

- EMS Educator Award
- EMS Medical Director Award
- EMS Administrator Award
- Public Information/Injury Prevention Award
- Citizen Award
- Private/Public Provider Award
- Volunteer Provider Award
- First Responder Award
- Air Medical Service Award
- Outstanding EMS Person of the Year
- Telecommunicator of the Year
- Regional Advisory Council of the Year

Three receive emergency funding

Three EMS providers recently received emergency funding designed to help areas that suffer devastating events. The Extraordinary Emergency Fund (EEF) is available to assist licensed EMS providers, hospitals and registered first responder organizations if unforeseeable events cause a degradation of service to the community. Situations that may severely reduce or incapacitate emergency response capability are considered extraordinary emergencies. For further information, please contact Roxanne Cuellar at Roxanne.cuellar@dshs.state.tx.us or (512) 834-6700, ext. 2377.

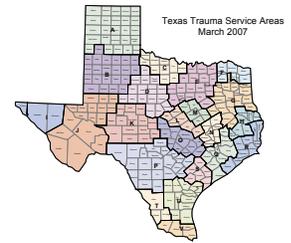
The following organizations were awarded Extraordinary Emergency Funding recently:

Shavano Park Fire Department EMS - \$3,300 for stretcher repairs.

Hawley VFD - \$6,646 to replace emergency communication system.

Ropes Volunteer EMS - \$5,570 to repair cardiac monitor/defibrillator.

What's the difference between a trauma system and trauma systems?



Q: I thought each state, including Texas, had *one* state trauma system. Why is it called the Office of EMS/Trauma *Systems* Coordination?

A: It's true — many states, including Texas, have (or are developing) state trauma systems. Because Texas is so big, however, it was divided into 22 geographic regions called "trauma service areas" (TSAs) when our state trauma system was being developed. Each of the 22 TSAs has a regional advisory council (RAC) for trauma. The 22 RACs then developed 22 individual regional EMS/trauma systems, which include such things as triage and transport guidelines, for their areas . . . and these 22 regional systems then make up the Texas trauma system. These TSAs are evolving to encompass acute care such as cardiac and stroke treatment.

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Household chemicals used for suicides

Several apparent suicide deaths in the U.S. caused by inhaling hydrogen sulfide gas — created by mixing household detergents — were recently reported in the media. The National Association of State EMS Officials reports that one incident in San Jose, California, resulted in a hazardous materials lockdown of the hospital, diversion of incoming ambulances, and decontamination of nearly 100 persons, including rescuers. NASEMSO encourages EMS responders to approach any closed, suspicious vehicle with extreme caution. For more information:

ATSDR (CDC): Medical Management Guidelines for Hydrogen Sulfide at www.atsdr.cdc.gov/Mhmi/mmg114.html

eMedicine: Toxicity, Hydrogen Sulfide <http://emedicine.medscape.com/article/815139-overview>

WISER: Hydrogen Sulfide <http://webwiser.nlm.nih.gov/getSubstanceData.do?substanceID=339&displaySubstanceName=Hydrogen+Sulfide>

NIOSH: Hydrogen Sulfide www.cdc.gov/niosh/npg/npgd0337.html

ERG: Guide 117 Hydrogen Sulfide <http://www.wapps.tc.gc.ca/saf-sec-sur/3/erg-gmu/erg/guidepage.aspx?guide=117>

Two ways to honor emergency responders

Besides the awards given at Texas EMS Conference, DSHS honors individuals in EMS in two other ways. For information about either of the following, contact Kelly Harrell at (512) 834-6743 or at kelly.harrell@dshs.state.tx.us.

Texas EMS Hall of Fame

The Texas Department of State Health Services honors individuals who have made significant contributions to emergency medical services in Texas. This honor is intended to remain a permanent part of the EMS history of this state. Nominations are due June 1. For more information on how to nominate someone for Texas EMS Hall of Fame or to see who is in the Hall of Fame, go the website at www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/emfam.shtm.



Texas EMS Hall of Honor

The Texas EMS Hall of Honor memorial honors emergency medical service personnel who lost their lives in the line of duty. The plaques hang permanently at the Office of EMS/Trauma Systems Coordination in Austin as a tribute to those individuals who made the ultimate sacrifice for public safety. Each plaque holds engraved names along with certifications and licensure, and date of death. The plaques are also displayed each year at the conference. Find the names of those killed in the line of duty at www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/emshon.shtm.



Quick Fact

According to study at Onokuduz Mayıs University in Turkey, where the cell phones of 200 hospital workers were tested, 94 percent of the phones carried methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), a virulent strain of bacteria with the potential to cause serious illness. The study was published in the *Annals of Clinical Microbiology and Antimicrobials*.



National EMS Memorial Service set for June

The 18th Annual National EMS Memorial Service will take place on June 26, 2010, at 6 p.m. MDT (7 p.m. Central Standard Time) at its new home in Colorado Springs, Colorado. The event honors those in EMS who have given their lives in the line of duty. Texas EMT Larry Wayne Feagin of Falfurrias is one of 26 to be honored at this year's service. Feagin, who went into cardiac arrest while on a call, was placed in the Texas Hall of Honor during the awards luncheon at Texas EMS Conference 2009.



At the same time, the EMS community around the nation will be observing the National EMS Moment of Silence in which a moment of radio silence is timed to coincide with the moment of silence observed during the actual service. In previous years, more than 800 agencies and dispatch centers from around the nation participated in the moment of silence. There's a suggested script and instructions for those agencies wishing to participate at http://nemsms.org/Press/2010Press_Release-NMOS.pdf.

The mission of the National EMS Memorial Service is to honor those in EMS who have given their lives in the line of duty, and to recognize the sacrifice they have made in service to their communities and their fellow man. Each year since 1992, hundreds of family members, friends, coworkers, EMS and political leaders, and colleagues from EMS agencies from around the nation gather together for the ceremony. Members of the honorees' families are presented with a medallion, symbolizing eternal memory; a U.S. Flag which has flown over the nation's Capitol, symbolizing service to the country; and a white rose, symbolizing undying love. Each honoree's name is engraved on a bronze oak leaf which is added to the National EMS Memorial.

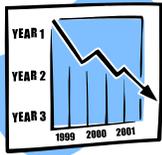
Texas EMS Conference
November 21-24
Austin

Attorney general rules on mental health transports



Chapter 573 of the Health and Safety Code provides for the emergency detention of a person believed to be mentally ill and a risk to him or herself or others. Yet some mental health facilities were requiring peace officers to have the patients "medically cleared" at hospitals before they would accept the patient for mental health treatment. Obviously, this provided some security challenges to both EMS personnel and to hospitals. The Texas Attorney General has ruled that mental health facilities are not statutorily authorized to require a peace officer to transport a person in custody, under chapter 573 of the Health and Safety Code, to a medical facility for a medical evaluation prior to taking that person to a mental facility. The complete opinion (GA-0753), issued on December 28, 2009, is on the web at www.oag.state.tx.us/opinions/opinions/50abbott/op/2009/htm/ga-0753.htm.

On Duty



Traffic fatalities down in 2009

The U.S. Department of Transportation recently announced that the number of overall traffic fatalities reported at the end of 2009 reached the lowest level since 1954, declining for the 15th consecutive quarter. According to early projections, the fatality rate, which takes into account the number of miles traveled, reached the lowest level ever recorded. The projected fatality data for 2009 places the highway death count at 33,963, a drop of 8.9 percent as compared to the 37,261 deaths reported in 2008. The fatality rate for miles traveled declined to the lowest on record, to 1.16 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT) down from 1.25 fatalities per 100 million VMT in 2008. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration attributes the decline in 2009 to a combination of factors that include high visibility campaigns to increase seat belt use and decrease drunk driving. In addition, the decline is also the result of safer roads, safer vehicles and motorists driving less. NHTSA annually collects crash statistics from the 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico to produce annual reports on traffic fatality trends. The final counts for 2009 will be made available in the summer of 2010. To view the preliminary fatality statistics, go to www.nrd.nhtsa.dot.gov/Pubs/811291.pdf.

Wyoming becomes 20th state to enact texting ban

Wyoming recently became the latest state to ban drivers from texting on cell phones. The new ban will allow law enforcement officials to ticket anyone caught texting while driving in Wyoming. According to research by the National Highway Traffic Administration (NHTSA), nearly 6,000 people died in 2008 in crashes involving a distracted or inattentive driver, and more than half a million were injured. In March, a Texas A&M University student was ordered to pay \$22 million in damages after a jury found that his texting while driving caused a fatal car crash. Austin enacted a texting ban within its city limits in January. NHTSA has launched a website on distracted driving, www.distraction.gov, as a forum and information clearinghouse.



CDC offers injury stats on web



CDC's Web-based Injury Statistics Query and Reporting System (WISQARS) is a leading source of injury statistics in the United States. WISQARS provides data on injury deaths, violent deaths, and nonfatal injuries, and now a new WISQARS fatal injury mapping module allows users to produce customized, color-coded maps of injury death rates, by intent (e.g., unintentional, homicide, or suicide) and mechanism of injury (e.g., motor vehicle-traffic, fall, fire/burn, poisoning, or cut/pierce). These maps show the distribution of injury death rates nationally, regionally, and for individual states and counties. In addition, annualized estimates of total lifetime medical and work loss costs resulting from injury-related deaths are provided for counties within individual states. The new module can help public health professionals compare injury rates across geographic areas and monitor fatal injuries and their associated burden in the United States. The new fatal injury mapping module is available at www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars.

Goal: 1 million trained in CPR

The Citizen CPR Foundation has announced a mass training project — a competition among the U.S. states to see who can train the most people in CPR, even if it's "hands only." Texas is participating and is tracking the training. Documentation on every class that involves compressions can be reported. If compressions are taught in class, it counts for this program. The Texas goal is one million in 2010. Any classes from Jan 1, 2010, until November 1, 2010, will be tracked. Forward the following information to texascitizenhero@yahoo.com:



1. Name of group (this is important so they know who to acknowledge)
2. Contact number
3. Email address
4. Number trained
5. Level of training (certified vs non-certified, etc.)

The tracking is being coordinated by Sherrie Wilson at emrsherrie@yahoo.com

Driver funding program proposes new rules



The Texas Department of Public Safety has proposed new rules for the Driver Responsibility Program (DRP) to address the program's financial impact on low-income individuals who are living at or below the poverty level.

The law, passed during the 78th Texas Legislature, established a system to assess surcharges based on certain traffic offenses that occurred on or after September 1, 2003. The 81st Texas Legislature amended the law to require a reduction for indigent individuals. Money collected goes toward funding the EMS/Trauma System in Texas. Last year, hospitals, RACs and EMS received about \$72 million.

The newly proposed rule would:

- Set DRP indigency at 125 percent of the poverty level.
- Allow electronic application online or by telephone.
- Require applicants to submit supporting documentation.
- Allow DPS to contract with a third party for application verification.
- Mandate a letter of approval or denial be mailed to any applicant.
- Provide applicants 90 days to pay the reduced fee, in full, and provide proof of insurance.

The proposed rule was published in the Texas Register for 30 days for public comment. The rule may be final and may go into effect as early as June.

Grants available for ECA training

Are you in a rural area that needs more EMS personnel? DSHS has a total of \$50,000 this fiscal year available for EMS training programs, registered first responder organizations (FROs), coordinators and instructors to conduct ECA courses in rural or underserved areas of the state lacking local EMS training resources. Grant funds cover the cost of instruction and textbooks, as well as other expenses such as printing and supplies. OEMS/TS will accept grant applications on a first-come-first-served basis until the funds run out for the fiscal year. Eligibility requirements for ECAT grants: A minimum of three students; students must agree to perform emergency care attendant services for at least one year with a local emergency medical service provider or first responder organization; services must be provided in a designated rural or underserved area of Texas, as determined by zip code or county; and the course coordinator must be affiliated with an educational program. And give yourself plenty of time: It takes about 60 days for an ECAT grant to work its way through the DSHS approval process. For more information, go to www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems/TrainingFunding.shtm or contact Roxanne Cuellar at (512) 834-6700 ext. 2377 or roxanne.cuellar@dshs.state.tx.us.



Recently awarded grant:

McGregor Volunteer EMS

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