



**EMMCO West, Inc.**

Northwestern PA EMS Council

July 2010

# LifeLine

**EMMCO West, Inc., NW PA Regional EMS Council**

## DOH Releases Updated Regulations

The PA Department of Health Bureau of EMS has released a revision of the EMS regulations. You can download the newest version from our website under Breaking News (home page). Take some time to review the newest changes. These regulations will define the EMS system in the Commonwealth. You may forward comments about the proposed regulations to EMMCO West. We will compile the comments and forward them to the Department of Health. Please be sure to reference which section of the regulations on which you are commenting.

## Congratulations!!

Congratulations to the services that have received their new or renewed license since April.

The following have renewed their license or recognition:

- Bloomfield VFD
- Brookside VFD
- Centerville VFD
- City of Franklin Fire Department (QRS)
- City of Franklin Police Department (QRS)
- Cochranton VFD Ambulance
- Cooperstown VFD (QRS)
- Edinboro VFD
- Elgin Beaverdam VFD
- Farmington Area Ambulance Service
- Glade VFD (QRS)
- Harborcreek VFD
- Lake City VFD
- Meadville Area Ambulance Service LLC
- Perry Hi-Way Hose Company
- Union City Ambulance Service Company

The following has become a new BLS services:  
Cornplanter Volunteer Fire Department

The following have become new recognized QRS services:

- Hydetown VFD (QRS)
- Rocky Grove VFD (QRS)

EMMCO West wishes to thank them all for their cooperation during this licensure renewal or new licensure process. It was a pleasure to work with all of you.

# Volunteer & Professional Spirit

Within public safety organizations, the concepts of volunteerism and professionalism are being blurred together. I have been a volunteer in some form of public safety organization for over 30 years. In my role as the Executive Director of EMMCO West, I have daily interactions with a variety of volunteer, paid, municipal based, hospital owned, and various other types of EMS system models. I have listened to, and/or have been a part of, a conversation regarding “this or that” public safety organization’s conduct and invariably at some point in the conversation a blurred perspective of volunteerism and professionalism appears. Volunteerism and professionalism have distinct definitions.

Volunteerism is a noble, self-filling, individual decision. An individual makes a decision to “volunteer” so that they can assist their neighbors and/or visitors to their community, when some type of assistance is required. A volunteer organization is comprised of similar minded individuals that have a desire to “volunteer” their time, expertise, experiences, etc...back to their community. These individuals do so without an expectation of receiving monetary payment or compensation for their time, efforts, or services. They donate their services to the volunteer organization and ultimately back to their community. Being a “volunteer” is an occupational decision, a decision that the individual makes to “work within their profession” without compensation; period!

A dictionary definition of professionalism reads, “the skill, competence, or character expected of a member of a highly trained profession”. Profession is defined as, “the use of professionals instead of amateurs” Note, the definitions don’t state, say, mention, imply, or have anything to do with the type of organization that an individual is associated with. As an EMS “professional”, regardless of being a volunteer, paid, partially paid, municipal, governmental, and/or whatever other type of EMS organization an individual is affiliated with, there are professional expectations for the EMS organization to meet. Volunteer, partially paid, fully paid, etc... regardless of the type of EMS organization, we are all expected to be EMS PROFESSIONALS!

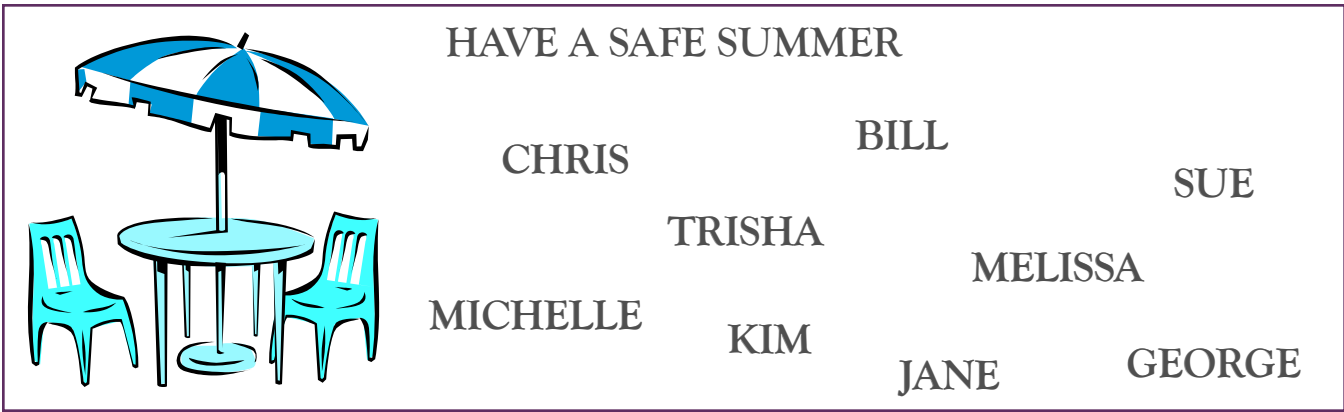
An EMS professional:

- possesses the skills needed to perform medical tasks and treatments
- shows compassion, understanding, empathy to their patients
- shows respects towards co-workers and fellow colleagues
- displays espree decorum, pride, confidence in their work

With the implementation of the national educational standards and Pennsylvania’s new EMS Act, EMS providers need to assure they are aspiring to the professional standards that are expected of today’s EMS professionals. What may have been acceptable practices and conduct ten or twenty years ago may not be today’s norm. We have a duty to provide prehospital care to the citizen’s of our communities to the best of our abilities. Keeping current with new protocols, treatments, and customer service skills are attributes for all EMS providers, regardless of whom their employer is! Let’s keep our heads up and high, as we are not amateurs, as “WE ARE” EMS Professionals!

Bill McClincy  
Executive Director  
EMMCO West

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## Licensure Tips

Since I've taken over from John Button, I thought I'd review some tips and suggestion from both John and myself about the licensure process.

Please note that most of the policies contained on the EMMCO West website ([www.emmco.org](http://www.emmco.org) under Licensure) are sample policies only. However there are two exceptions to this - The ALS Medical Directors Agreement is required to be used as is and the Lights and Siren policy (f). Regardless of how you choose to adopt the policies, the remaining policies are SAMPLE TEMPLATES that you may wish to consider.

- BLS services do not need to complete policy (o) Medical Command Notification or policy (s) Drug Use, Control & Security at the moment.
- All service levels must have an infection control policy in place (including QRS).
- Assure the highest-ranking administrative officer signs the application, all agreements, and all policies. This must be the president, owner, chief executive officer, or chairman of the board.
- PSAP reports must be current, along with suction unit reports.
- Verify your License Plates on your vehicle. Some services have changed to the EV plate and have not done so on the application.
- Verify personnel - spelling of name, EMS level, certification number & expiration date and EVOC.
- Make sure the management team, along with all personnel, has a mechanism in place from the service attesting that the personnel are responsible people.
- QRS services are required to submit a copy of all emergency EMS patient care reports to EMMCO West by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the next month following the call. These are now done entirely electronically. The patient care report requirements must be completed at least 90% of the time in order for a service to receive EMSOP funding. Also, in order to receive EMSOP funding, each QRS service must complete a suction unit report and submit this report to EMMCO West. This report is part of the EMMCO West quality improvement project. The suction unit report form may be found on the EMMCO West website [www.emmco.org](http://www.emmco.org) under Licensure – Testing Portable & On Board Suction Units.
- If you have any questions, I will be glad to assist you.

Jane I. Hamza, EMS System Specialist

## Continuing Education Corner

Summer is here and believe me, I realize the last thing that folks want to think about is their continuing education, but for those of you who will expire by the end of the year, or for the ALS practitioners out there, this is exactly when you should be thinking about your con ed. Here are a few frequently asked questions that might leave you behind the eight ball if you aren't aware of them.

Q- I have taken all the courses on the LMS, can you reset the classes so I can take them again?

A- Sorry, but the LMS cannot be reset. This is a system that the PA DOH has contracted with to provide you free online CE. Once you take a class it's completed and you cannot take it again for CE credit. I always advise people that they should not be dependent on the LMS, but rather use it to get a couple of credits at the end of your certification period if needed.

Q- Will my con ed carry over to the next certification period?

A- No. According to the regulations you must complete your required amount of CE within your certification period. Once you recertify, your slate is wiped clean and you must start all over again.

Q- Why is it that I send my CPR card in, but you never seem to have a record of it?

A- There are several reasons for this. The records are hand entered into the state website so mistakes are possible, but there are a few more common issues that we see:

We can't read the fax- CPR cards that have a shaded background behind the name or issue/ renewal date are not always readable when faxed. When the fax is received here in our office these shaded areas sometimes appear too dark for us to read. Without a cover sheet we have no way of knowing who is sending us the card. We have over 3000 active practitioners in the region. Sometimes the fax machine is busy and we never actually get your fax.

You didn't include your certification number on the fax. Without this information we cannot credit your account. For instance, if we have two Joe Smith's in our region, who should we credit? Neither of them get credit until someone calls us to fix the problem.

You thought your instructor was going to send the card. The companies that issue CPR cards that are approved by the PA DOH are independent companies. They do not automatically send us a copy of your card. It is up to you to send us the newest CPR card.

Q-I've completed all my con ed and met my CPR requirement, when will I get my new card?

A- New cards are processed by the Department of Health 60 days prior to your expiration. If you are about to expire and believe you have met all the recertification requirements and you have not received your new card, call the office. There may be an issue with your certification card.

If you have questions about your card, call me or email [mthompson@emmco.org](mailto:mthompson@emmco.org)

Melissa Thompson



# 2010 Annual Awards

This year the annual awards were presented during EMS Week at the Legislative Breakfast at Cross Creek Resort.

The 2010 Volunteer EMS Practitioner Award is presented annually to honor an individual practitioner for their continued support of volunteer activities and the promotion of the volunteer spirit among their peers. This award was sponsored by First National Insurance. This year's recipient has been a member of his department for twelve years. He began his EMS career later in life, at age 63, when he went to visit his daughter in Maryland, who is a paramedic and State Trooper. He went on a few ride alongs with her and fell in love with EMS. He returned home and enrolled in the next available EMT program. He was described as "a team player and eager to learn about the emergency medical field". Congratulations to Mr. David Johns of Fellows Club Volunteer Ambulance Service in Conneautville.

The EMS Achievement Award is presented annually to honor a regional EMS practitioner that has displayed leadership, insight, and vision to improve EMS within the EMMCO West region. This award is sponsored by EMMCO West. This year's recipient works for a paid service and also volunteers with his local fire department. He is described as "truly professional with every patient and other fire and EMS responders, he truly encompasses the qualities and traits that all of us should inspire to become". Congratulations to Mr. Robbie Schleicher of EmeryCare and Brookside Fire Department in Erie.

Trisha Skelton

**SAVE THE DATE!!!**

**SYMPOSIUM 2011**

**WILL BE HELD APRIL 7-10, 2011**

**AT THE AMBASSADOR CONFERENCE CENTER**

**DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH**

*Edward G. Rendell, Governor  
Calvin B. Johnson, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary of Health*

This project is funded in part under a contract with the PA Department of Health.

## Zoll AED

If your service has a Zoll AED, which has not received a special software upgrade, it may not be capable of detecting if the batteries are failing. There are still about 5 AEDs in the EMMCO West region which have not received the upgrade or in which Zoll has not been notified if the devices were updated. If your service owns a Zoll AED, speak with your EMS officer to assure that

the device has received the upgrade. I am aware of several services who have definitely received the upgrade. Those include Edinboro, Lawrence Park, Tionesta, and Hayfield. Please have your EMS officer contact me if you have a Zoll AED and are not one of the services listed above.

Chris Heile



## Teachers Can Make A Difference!!

We are noticing more students are getting into the EMS field, not because they are following in a family member's footsteps, but because they are using EMS as a stepping stone for another career, their fire department requires the certification, they are unemployed, or any other number of countless reasons. That means that the standard class structure we were used to teaching (classes filled with young students just out of high school, eager to learn, enthusiastic to join the "family business") is becoming a thing of the past. We as educators must make the appropriate changes to keep up. I know there are many instructors in our region doing exciting new things in the classroom to enhance the educational experience and make learning more interactive.

Bonnie and Gary Sickler are from Warren County. They do a thing called "hat night". Depending on the curriculum for the night, (medical emergencies, trauma emergencies, splinting, excetra), they write down all the possible scenarios on small pieces of paper. The pieces of paper are folded and put into a hat. Each student must take one of the pieces of paper and perform the stated item. Throughout the course of the night, each student gets the chance to be a patient, a provider, or to watch others perform. The trick about this game is that the person that is the patient, must know how to act out the injury or illness without checking in the book. You can evaluate the cognitive learning of both the person doing the assessment and the person being the patient.

Chad Rugh is from the Venango County area. Chad is currently in the final stages of an EMT program. He does something that is very simple, but very rarely performed, he uses moulage throughout the practice sessions. So often, students never see moulage on a patient actor until the state exam. This is a great way to get student's prepared for the state final.

Larry Bauer is from the Clarion County area. When students first sign up for a certification program, they are all excited to get into the program and start getting their hands dirty. They want to learn skills. Larry has changed the outline of your typical certification class so that students start out right away with CPR. His first night of practical sessions begins on the second night of class. Students do their "boring" paperwork and immediately begin on the "fun" hands on learning. This is a great way to grab the attention of the class.

I know there are more dynamic instructors out there and I would love the opportunity to come to one of your classes to see what special things you do. Please remember "people won't care how much you know if they don't know how much you care" (author unknown). True educators love the job not the money.

Michelle Eaton



# Suction Unit and Missed Call Projects

I like to believe that the Quality Improvement Committee has put together two pretty simple and fair QI projects.

Are we making our calls? If we can't make our calls, nothing else really matters.

Does our most basic equipment work? We should be checking our equipment regularly anyway.

As we approach the implementation of the new EMS Act, it's important that services really have a grasp of their ability to respond to the calls in the communities with which they have agreed to serve. It's equally important for EMMCO West to know where we stand from a system perspective.

Suction units are a vital piece of equipment. Without a patent airway we do not have a viable patient. We need to assure that our equipment is functional. This project has helped identify shortcomings and allowed our office to use special funding to try to improve suction unit pass rates. We hope to augment that funding in the upcoming fiscal year.



Your services' participation is vital in the success of these projects. Services aren't losing their licenses due to staffing, nor are they being reprimanded for suction units not passing inspections. Quite the opposite is true. Many services who were experiencing the most problems with these units received new suction units funded at 80%.

So, the bottom line is that these QI projects are not just busy work for you and me. The data is used for planning and improvement. The more data we get, the better standing we have for funding and ability to improve our system.

Chris Heile

## Do We Have Your Correct Address?

If you have relocated or changed your phone number since receiving your last certification card or status report, please contact our office. You can make changes to your DOH profile by logging on to <https://ems.health.state.pa.us/emsportal/> or we would be happy to assist you with this. Please check your profile occasionally. Correct information means that you will get any letters or recertification information in a timely manner. Also, if you have changed your name for any reason, please update your profile.



Sue Julius



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The Bottom Line Is Patient Care.

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