

IN CASE OF FIRE, GET OUT, THEN CALL 911

SPECIAL OPERATIONS

April 1, 2017 the Monarch Fire Protection District hosted a joint training exercise that simulated a downed and lost aircraft. While modern equipment means an aircraft, which goes down in the United States, will be found in hours or days, time can be of the essence to provide emergency care to injured occupants. Multiple agencies in our area participated in the event as they would in a real-world situation.



Deputy Chief Crews crafted a scenario where an inbound aircraft reported engine trouble to the control tower of the Spirit of St. Louis County Airport. Emergency units were quickly dispatched to the airport. Then, while those units were responding, the tower advised emergency crews, radio communication with the aircraft had been lost. The last known radar position was about 4 miles southwest of the airport. Upon receipt of this information the Incident Commander (IC) plotted the possible crash site to be in Babler Park. Units were re-assigned to specific locations in a coordinated search effort.

Commercial and private aviation aircraft are required to have and maintain an Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT). In the training scenario, the control tower reported to the IC they were receiving an ELT transmission from the downed aircraft. The IC added the Civil Air Patrol to the Unified Command Structure, a multi-agency command system used to manage various segregate emergency agencies. Fire units were deployed with aircraft radios designed to listen for ELT transmissions. CAP flew a choreographed flight path designed to home in on ELT transmissions. CAP also deployed a ground crew trained in ELT detection.

The primary objective of the drill was to employ a multi-agency coordinated search and rescue effort. New and improved radio communication and radio detection equipment were introduced. The outcome was better than expected. The Command Structure unfolded without incident. Safety was maintained throughout the event and the search was successfully concluded.

We are very grateful to the crews from the Metro-West, Cottleville, and Boles Fire Protection Districts, the Civil Air Patrol, Central County 911, the FAA, St. Louis County Police, and the crews from the Monarch Fire Protection District. The exercise was a complete success; everyone was professional, spirited, and engaged.



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**In Emergency,
Call 9-1-1
All other inquiries,
call (314) 514-0900**

SPRING 2017

MONARCH FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

INTEGRITY • ACCOUNTABILITY • RESPONSIBILITY

FIRE BOARD CONSIDERS TAX REDUCTION... TAXPAYERS WEIGH IN

This year we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the formation of the Chesterfield Fire Protection District. The original department had two stations and 12 volunteers and was led by Chief Otto Biele (his son Chip retired in 2012 having served as the Chief for 16 years). In 2003, the Board of Directors changed the name of the District to the Monarch Fire Protection District in order to distinguish it from the newly incorporated City of Chesterfield, which was begun in the late 1980s.

Many things have changed throughout the years. The District originally only fought fires using volunteers and this has evolved into more than 100 full-time paid firefighters/paramedics. Fire prevention has taken on a large role in keeping residents safe from fire and other hazards before they occur. While the District had ambulance service a few years after its formation, it consisted of a station wagon used to transport patients to the hospital with little or no medical care provided on the scene. Today, nearly 75% of the Districts emergency calls are for EMS services using Advanced Life Support ("ALS") Vehicles, staffed with two paramedics who perform life-saving services right on the scene of the call or in the ALS Vehicle.

The evolution of the District has helped bring an improved quality of life to those we serve. The Board works hard to use your tax dollars wisely in providing these services with the second lowest tax rate in St. Louis County among all fire protection districts. As you will read elsewhere in this newsletter, we are evaluating a new revenue model which will combine a fee for EMS services to residents and businesses and a still lower tax rate. We have billed non-residents for these same services for many years and that program has worked well. This will, in effect, shift a portion of the revenues from all taxpayers, to those who actually receive EMS services. This has been a common practice among neighboring fire districts for years and we believe the time has come for Monarch to make this change. It is noteworthy that Medicare and most health insurance plans include EMS services as a benefit for which policyholders are already paying premiums. There will be no increase in out-of-pocket costs to residents.

The Board will hold a public comment session on May 03 at 7 PM in order to give you a chance to let us know your thoughts about this change, which we anticipate will go into effect in June. Of course you are welcome to attend an Open Board Meeting at any time to offer your comments and suggestions about this prospective change or any other issue you wish to make known to the Board. We also invite and welcome letters and emails addressed to Chief Spiegel. The postal and email addresses are contained elsewhere in this newsletter.

GANS RE-ELECTED SPRING 2017



Board President Rick Gans has been re-elected to serve a six year term as Director of the Monarch Fire Protection District. Director Gans, already the longest serving director in the 60 year history of the District, was first appointed to fill an unexpired Board term in 1998. His tenure includes a four-year hiatus and at the conclusion of this new term, he will have served a total of just over 21 years on the Board of Directors.

Said Gans, "much has changed over the years, but the commitment of the District and its fire fighters and paramedics in delivering life and property saving services has remained the one important constant. I never take for granted the trust people place in the Board to provide the best possible services to our residents and businesses with your tax dollars." Gans was sworn in by Board Treasurer Robin Harris in April.

www.monarchfpd.org

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CHIEF'S CORNER - THE TIME MAY BE RIGHT

Emergency Services have evolved; it is no longer a simple stretcher ride to the hospital. The term Ambulance, has been replaced with Life Support Vehicle (LSV), and for good reason. Emergency service providers arrive on scenes in a mobile emergency room. LSVs come equipped with 12 lead EKG Monitors capable of monitoring heart rate and rhythm, blood pressure, pulse oximetry, telemetry, and can provide defibrillation. Blood glucose monitors, fetal heart monitors, intravenous fluid warmers, a full complement of traumatic injury and illness care supplies, emergency room comparable pharmacy, and decontamination tools and supplies, are all standard equipment on the LSV. Crews are directed to emergencies with state of the art computer aided dispatch tools. They interact with physicians and nurses through clear reliable communication tools. In addition to all of this, the LSV has a complete complement of firefighting gear and breathing apparatus for the crew.

This state-of-the-art apparatus, diagnostic equipment, pharmacy items, and emergency supplies are expensive to purchase and maintain. Equally expensive is the on-going training required of our paramedics that they may use these tools and supplies and deliver emergency medical care. There is an ever increasing financial demand on pre-hospital emergency medical services.

Insurance carriers, Medicare, and State Governments have recognized the financial burden and have provided the coverage and legislation to assist. More and more services have shifted from fully tax supported to a tax and user fee combination process. Monarch Fire Protection District has been exploring a similar change. Preliminary data suggests it is most beneficial to the residents to add a user based fee program to the revenue side of the budget. The data indicates that Property Tax could be reduced and revenues could be improved with a transition to resident billing. Adding resident billing could result in an approximate 2-cent reduction in Property Tax, a 2-cent reduction in Personal Property Tax, and still add to ambulance revenues, with no out-of-pocket costs to residents.

The Board of Directors and Staff invite residents to visit the website (www.monarchfpd.org) and participate in a survey as well as offer feedback. Visit our Facebook page for current information. We also invite residents and business owners to attend open board meetings, dates and times are posted on the website, email or write the Board with comments and questions.

Thank you for your participation and I am always available for your comments or questions.

Sincerely,
Cary Spiegel,
Acting Chief
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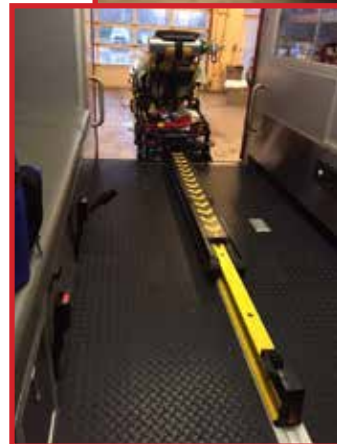
IT'S ALL ABOUT SAFETY

The Monarch Fire Protection District (MFPD) is always proud to inform our residents of updated apparatus and equipment. Monarch is in the process of upgrading our EMS capability. Hopefully this is the only exposure you will have with the back of one of our ambulances (LSVs), so let us introduce you to the newest and safest patient care technology.

The new generation of Life Support Vehicle is designed with much attention to patient care and safety as well as crew safety. LSV cabs are equipped with full airbag and seatbelt restraint devices. The patient compartment is also designed with airbag technology and seatbelt systems ergonomically designed to protect patient and attendant while allowing the paramedic to treat the patient. The NHTSA, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has rated the restraint system capable of withstanding extreme forces, up to 10 times the force of gravity (10 G's).

Workers' Compensation data indicates that there are significant injuries to paramedics during loading and unloading the patient. MFPD has similar data validating the concern and has equipped the LSVs with auto-loaders. This system uses a patented lock, lift, and load technology that is capable of lifting up to 700 pounds. You can imagine the risk to paramedics and patients attempting to lift such an awkward load. The loading system is expensive, but not nearly as expensive as an injury to a patient because an awkward lift went bad or a crippling back injury to one of our employees.

All these measures are helping the Monarch Fire Protection District meet our mission of providing the best care possible, in the safest manner possible.



TORNADO PREPAREDNESS AT WORK AND AT HOME

Preparedness involves a continuous process of planning, equipping, training and exercising. Planning for tornadoes requires identifying a place to take shelter, being familiar with and monitoring your community's warning system, and establishing procedures to account for individuals in the building. Employers may need to obtain additional equipment and/or resources (e.g. Emergency Supply Kits) identified in the plan. In addition, workers need to be trained and plans need to be practiced to ensure that personnel are familiar with what to do in the event of a tornado.

PLANNING

Identifying Shelter Locations

An underground area, such as a basement or storm cellar, provides the best protection from a tornado. If an underground shelter is not available, consider the following:

- Seek a small interior room or hallway on the lowest floor possible
- Stay away from doors, windows, and outside walls
- Stay in the center of the room, and avoid corners because they attract debris
- Rooms constructed with reinforced concrete, brick or block with no windows and a heavy concrete floor or roof system overhead
- Avoid auditoriums, cafeterias and gymnasiums that have flat, wide-span roofs.

Personnel should also be aware of what to do if caught outdoors when a tornado is threatening. Seek shelter in a basement or a sturdy building. If one is not within walking distance, try to drive in a vehicle, using a seat belt, to the nearest shelter. If flying debris is encountered while in a vehicle, there are two options: 1) staying in the vehicle with the seat belt on, keeping your head below the windows and covering it with your hands or a blanket, 2) if there is an area which is noticeable lower than the roadway, lie in that area and cover your head with your hands.

Accountability procedures

The following steps are recommended to help ensure the safety of personnel if a tornado occurs:

WARNING SYSTEMS

Tornado Watch - Tornadoes are likely to occur in the watch area. Be ready to act quickly and take shelter, and check supply kits. Monitor radio and television stations for more information.

Tornado Warning - Imminent threat - A tornado has been sighted in the area or has been indicated by radar. Take shelter immediately.

Your local emergency management office can provide information about your community's tornado warning system.

- Develop a system for knowing who is in the building in the event of an emergency
- Establish an alarm system to warn workers
 - Test systems frequently
 - Develop plans to communicate warnings to personnel with disabilities or who do not speak English
- Account for workers, visitors, and customers as they arrive in the shelter
 - Use a prepared roster or checklist
 - Take a head count
- Assign specific duties to workers in advance; create checklists for each specific responsibility. Designate and train workers alternates in case the assigned person is not there or is injured

Some businesses are required to have an Emergency Action Plan meeting the requirements under 29 CFR 1910.38, see Evacuation Plans and Procedures eTool at <https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/evacuation/index.html> for more information. Though Emergency Action Plans primarily involve evacuations, emergency planning for tornadoes involve identifying safe places of refuge for workers to go to in the event of tornadoes.

EQUIPPING

- Get emergency supply kits and keep them in shelter locations
 - Basic Disaster Supplies Kit at <http://www.ready.gov/basic-disaster-supplies-kit>.
- Learn more about NOAA Weather Radio at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/>.

TRAINING AND EXERCISES

- Ensure that all workers know what to do in case of an emergency.
- Practice shelter-in-place plans on a regular basis.
- Update plans and procedures based on lessons learned from exercises.

For more information, see the preparedness guide (PDF) at <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/severeweather/resources/ttl6-10.pdf> developed by NOAA, FEMA and the American Red Cross.

Additional guidance on emergency plans:

- Tornadoes: Being Prepared. at <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/tornadoes/prepared.asp> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- Tornadoes at <http://www.ready.gov/tornadoes> Ready.gov - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

