

Weekly Communications

Happy 2015 everyone! It's that time of year when we head to the gym; decide to go back to school; proclaim this is the year we really will organize the garage; and so on. In other words, it's resolution time. The EMS office has resolved to improve our communications with all the providers, agencies, and the public in 2015. One of those methods will be sending out updates from our office once a week. Each Tuesday we will out updates on current news and the status of projects the office is working on. If you have questions, comments, or ideas for items you would like to hear from us on, please email Michelle at mlbrisson@co.skagit.wa.us.

Influenza

From the Public Health Department: As of Friday 1/2/15 there have been seven deaths from the flu in Washington State. None of the deaths have been in Skagit County. Six of the deaths have been from the H3N2 strain that has mutated since the flu vaccine was made in March, and therefore that strain in the vaccine is not protective. Ages of the deaths; 2 (25-49), 2 (50-64) and 3 (65+).

Ebola

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) have removed **Mali** from the list of Ebola-affected nations subject to enhanced visa and port-of-entry screening. The same enhanced visa and port-of-entry screenings remain in effect for **Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone**, and travelers are advised to avoid nonessential travel to the three countries still having Ebola outbreaks.

Infectious disease transports

Protocols and procedures are currently be refined, however the EMS office, Mount Vernon Fire and Skagit Valley Hospital have been working collaboratively to establish a centrally located, dedicated transport unit that can be used for known or suspected infectious disease transports. Responders that encounter stable patients with potentially highly infectious diseases (like Ebola) will be able to call for transport by trained crews from MVFD, who will then transport the patient to SVH. More details regarding protocols and procedures to follow in the coming weeks. Any questions, comments or thoughts should be directed to earlk@co.skagit.wa.us.

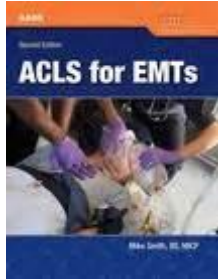


ESO ePCR rollout

The long anticipated rollout of the ESO ePCR system is (hopefully) not too far from going live with the first few agencies. The transition from the EMS Commission to a County department has created more than a few unanticipated delays and challenges, however just two hurdles remain before we can begin collecting countywide data on a single, standardized system. We realize this project has taken longer to implement than originally anticipated, but our goal is to make sure it's done right, not just fast. In the meantime, if you have any questions or concerns, please email Joel at joelp@co.skagit.wa.us so he can share your question and the answer with everyone in a future Weekly Update.

EMT class

The January 2015 EMT-B class is filling up fast. As of today we have only two vacancies left, so if you or someone you know is interested, please contact the EMS office ASAP. Classes start Thursday, January 15th. Contact mlbrisson@co.skagit.wa.us for more information.



ACLS for EMTs

The first Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) for EMTs class is scheduled for this Saturday. The purpose of this one day class is to familiarize EMTs with cardiac emergencies, the skills used to manage them, and teamwork principles that ensure the best possible patient outcomes. This class is already full; however plans are in the works to offer another class soon. Please email mlbrisson@co.skagit.wa.us if you would like more information or to sign up for the next class.

Resident / Non-Resident Fee Schedule

Earlier today the Skagit County Board of County Commissioners adopted a new ambulance fee schedule for the county. The new fee schedule maintains the current rates for all Skagit County residents and adds a new rate schedule for non-residents of Skagit County who are transported by our EMS services. Skagit County joins a multitude of other counties and jurisdictions that have EMS levies and charge separate rates for residents and non-residents based on the fact that residents are already subsidizing the system through annual EMS levy payments. Below is the new fee schedule. For comparison, the median home value in Skagit County is \$261,400, which at the current levy rate of \$0.375 per \$1,000 of assessed value equals an annual EMS levy payment of \$98.03 – or just under \$600 during the six year levy cycle.

CMS #	Level of Service Codes	Resident	Non - Resident
A0428	BLS – Non-Emergency Transport	\$425	\$638
A0429	BLS – Emergency Transport	\$590	\$885
A0426	ALS – Non-Emergency Transport, Level 1	\$775	\$1163
A0427	ALS – Emergency Transport, Level 1	\$775	\$1163
A0433	ALS, Level 2	\$820	\$1230
A0434	Specialty Care Transport	\$850	\$1275
A0425	Mileage	\$15.00	\$18.00

Thanks!

Most importantly – a BIG thank you to every one of our responders for all you do no matter the time of day or day of the week, from volunteer first responders to full time paramedics; each of you is an important part of what makes Skagit County a great place to live, work, and serve others in their hour of need. Until next week,

Your EMS office staff

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