

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

The goal of the Emergency Medical Services division is to safely provide the highest quality of pre-hospital care. Emergency interventions are determined by Imperial County Health Department under medical control provided by El Centro Regional Medical Center.

The El Centro Fire Department is a first response/non-transport provider. We are committed to Advanced Life Support service from each of our two stations and every emergency unit is equipped with ALS equipment. Half of our personnel are capable of providing some level of advanced life support. The Emergency Medical Services program is under the direction of Battalion Chief Timothy Reel. Administration focuses on three areas of improvement.

Employee Safety:

Employee safety is our highest priority. Infection control is the first step taken at all EMS calls. Employees are provided with personal protective equipment to meet universal precautions standards. Invasive procedures are performed using shielded needles to prevent accidental needle sticks. Although, we have had some close calls we had no cases where our employees contracted any occupational illnesses. All employees are vaccinated for hepatitis B and tested for tuberculosis.

Protocol Upgrades:

El Centro Fire Department may be the most unique Emergency Medical Services provider in California. We have a four-tiered service level including: EMT-I (Basic Life Support), EMT-I Advanced Scope (Limited Advanced Life Support), EMT-II (Limited Advanced Life Support), and EMT-Paramedic (Advanced Life Support).

Most advanced life support procedures are standing orders. When indicated, base station contact is done via cell phone.

Quality Assurance:

Quality assurance administration is provided by The Imperial County Health Department Emergency Medical Services Agency. The Imperial County Fire Chiefs Association's Emergency Medical Services subcommittee has taken on the responsibility for data based issues. Examples of these issues include analysis of released patients, who against medical advice, refuse further emergency medical treatment. El Centro Regional Medical Center reviews individual cases for appropriateness of medical interventions and takes corrective measures when needed. In addition, the fire department EMS Coordinator and/or peers review every advanced life support case. EMS personnel attend bi-weekly base station meetings and case review, conference and seminars, and on-line distance learning to meet Continuing Education requirements

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS EMERGENCY RESPONSE

The main goal of the Fire Department Hazardous Material Response program is to protect Life, Property and the Environment. To do this we need to be able to identify hazardous materials, decontaminate and treat exposed victims and contain leaks, spills, and fires. Terrorism has entered into our scope of potential incidents. Chemical detection and protective equipment is the same for accidental and intentional releases. In addition, our department has personnel trained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation for hazardous/explosive device responses. They are members of the Imperial County Arson and Bomb Team and respond countywide.

Battalion Chief Tim Reel coordinates the Hazardous Materials Emergency Response program. The city of El Centro is an active member of the Imperial Valley Hazardous Emergency Assistance Team (IVHEAT), a countywide hazardous materials emergency response team. The city of El Centro and the County of Imperial have mutual aid agreements with San Diego, Riverside and the City of Yuma, Arizona for hazardous materials emergency response.