



# Village Fire Department

Newsletter, July 2016

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The Village Fire Department provides fire, rescue and advanced life support ambulance transport services to the residents and visitors of the cities of Bunker Hill Village, Hedwig Village, Hilshire Village, Hunters Creek Village, Piney Point Village and Spring Valley Village.

## First and Second Quarter Department Statistics:

Response Numbers and Types			Response Times		
Fire Type calls:	638	59%	Dispatch Time:	57 Seconds	
EMS calls:	448	41%	Turnout Time:	39 Seconds	
Total Calls:	1086		Travel Time:	4:13	
2016 Budget:	\$5,153,941		# of Patients Transported to the Hospital:	364	
Spent 1 <sup>st</sup> qtr:	\$2,456,491				
	\$120,474	under budget			

Definitions: **Dispatch Time**, the time it takes the department dispatcher to notify the firefighters/paramedics of the incident (National Standard is 60 Seconds).  
**Turnout Time**, the time it takes the firefighters/paramedics to go enroute to the incident after being notified (National Standard is 60 seconds).  
**Travel Time**, The time it takes to travel from the fire station to the incident location.

## Emergency Medical Services

Although the name of this Department is Village Fire Department, in addition to responding to fires, car accidents and such, the primary lifesaving service we perform every day is Emergency Medical Services (EMS). To some it is a surprise the fire department provides EMS ambulance services. Within our Department ALL our firefighters are EMS providers and ALL of our EMS providers are firefighters. Being cross-trained provides the residents of the Villages highly trained personnel at a significant cost savings. There are just not as many fires as there used to be. However, with the chemicals used in home furnishing construction today, it's critical that you have firefighters immediately available in the horrific event that you have a house fire. Each day, the Village Fire Department is staffed with a minimum of 10 firefighters. In addition to staffing the fire engine and ladder truck, these ten firefighters also staff our 2 ambulances.

Those of us that are older and can remember the early days of ambulance service may recall the local ambulance was staffed by the local funeral company. The ambulance drivers had almost no training. It was convenient though, if the patient passed away they could efficiently take him to the funeral home. As time has passed, paramedics came into the EMS equation. In the 1970s, these newly trained paramedics were authorized to provide oxygen, and then with permission, provided over the telephone or radio from a doctor, could give a few drugs and even start an IV.

Today, the Village Fire Department's paramedics, emergency medical technicians and ambulances are capable of providing immediate lifesaving care moments after you call 911. Using our Patient Care Protocols and under the supervision of our Department's medical director, Dr. S. Malone, our paramedics no longer require permission to administer drugs. Our ambulances are highly equipped rolling emergency rooms.

This morning we responded to smoke in a house in Bunker Hill Village. The smoke was located at the electrical drop outside of the house. After we secured the power and while waiting for CenterPoint to repair the line, the homeowner shared with me a story about her mother in Austin. Briefly, I would like to share that story.

Our resident was in Austin with her older Mom and Dad. Her Mom began suffering from the traditional signs of a stroke; loss of use of her arm, drooping face, loss of the ability to speak. Dad insisted that his daughter load Mom into the car, and drive her to the hospital. However a neighbor here in the Villages once told the daughter never to drive to the hospital but to call 911 for EMS. Disobeying her Dad, she called an ambulance. The ambulance arrived quickly, started an intravenous (IV) line and transported Mom to the hospital. The ambulance called the hospital prior to arrival, so when Mom arrived at the emergency room, the hospital staff was waiting for her and immediately began administering stroke medication and treatment. Due to the actions of her daughter, Mom survived her serious stroke with minor effects.

The Village Fire Department provides the same extraordinary level of care. When a patient meets stroke criteria, we typically will transport to Methodist downtown, a renowned stroke care provider.

Here is a comparison, if you are experiencing chest pain:

1. If you drive to the hospital in your car, during the drive you continue experiencing pain which can cause further heart damage. When you arrive at the hospital, you come into the emergency room through the front doors; you will enter the triage center, where they will begin assessing your condition. After this you will be brought into a treatment room where you will begin to receive and IV and the first line cardiac drugs.
2. If you call 911.  
When the call is answered by the fire department dispatcher, by asking specific questions, the dispatcher immediately dispatches the ambulance and a fire truck. Remember the firefighters on the fire truck are also trained in EMS. The dispatcher provides the EMS crew information about your condition over the radio, then the dispatcher will begin providing the patient immediate care instructions over the phone, such as, when appropriate, recommending the patient taken baby aspirin. All Village Fire Department dispatchers are nationally certified in Emergency Medical Dispatch.

Within minutes, the paramedics arrive at your home; you will see them immediately initiate lifesaving care. Using the latest in technology, they will obtain and interpret a 12 lead EKG, start an IV and as appropriate administer the first line cardiac drugs. These actions can reduce your time at the hospital. The hospital will be notified of the patient and as we bring the patient into the ambulance entrance of the ER, the ER staff is waiting and immediate continues care.

The key to this article is to call 911. It is very common, particularly for older residents, to delay calling 911 until very far into their medical emergency. If you suspect you or your family member is suffering a stroke, a heart attack or any medical emergency CALL 911. Please do not be afraid to call us. We hear many times from our patients that they do not want to inconvenience us. It is never an inconvenience, we are here to help.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me or better, stop by the fire station and visit. We will show you our fire and EMS equipment.

David Foster, Fire Chief, 713-468-7941,

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