

Madison County Department of Emergency Medical Services

Standard Operating Guideline



Title	Inclement Weather Policy / Modified Response Plan
Number	043
Adoption Date	1/5/07
Revision Date	2/24/07
Approved by	Lewis Jenkins, EMS Director



Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to outline the uniform system for response and operations during periods of severe weather. This policy is governed by the Madison County Emergency Services Advisory Committee, made up of the Sheriff, EMS Director, MCRS Captain, MCVFD Chief, E911 Coordinator, Emergency Management Coordinator, and several members of the Board of Supervisors. In order for the Inclement Weather Policy to be activated, authorization is required by any two members of the committee. In the event that an EMS employee feels criteria have been met for policy activation, have the Duty Officer contact the EMS Director at the most appropriate time. If the EMS Director cannot be reached, the MCRS Captain and/or MCVFD Chief should be contacted instead.

Definition:

A severe weather condition exists any time there is:

- A. High Wind (hurricane or tropical depression, tornados);
- B. Wildfires;
- C. Severe rain, flooding;
- D. Winter weather meeting the following criteria:
 1. Three or more inches of snow or mixed precipitation on the ground, or predicted to accumulate in the next 12 hour period;
 2. Secondary roads become or remain snow/ice covered;
 3. Drifting snow;
 4. Significant sleet/ice or freezing rain covering roadways.

Responses:

Incident responses shall be adjusted in accordance with the following:

- A. Modified Response Plan:
 1. An ambulance (1) will only be taken to motor vehicle accidents where:
 - a. There are reported or confirmed injuries;
 - b. There is a report of an overturned vehicle;
 - c. Other information is available that suggests a high likelihood of injury;
 - d. When the arrival of a police or fire unit is delayed greater than 20 minutes;
 2. A heavy squad will be taken only to a confirmed entrapment.
 3. When responses to calls do occur and wrecked/unattended/stranded vehicles are found, wrap the mirror or a part of those vehicles that is closest to the road with blaze orange surveyor's tape so that multiple calls aren't made to the same vehicle as weather continues. The tape can be

found in all MEMS/MCRS vehicles in either the driver's side door console or center console.

Procedures:

A. Ambulances

1. The four wheel drive ambulances should be staffed, stocked with extra supplies and readied for prolonged service;
2. When roads become snow or ice covered, only the four-wheel drive ambulances should respond;
3. Once the four wheel drive ambulances are placed in-service, the two wheel drive ambulances shall be held in reserve only to respond to calls when no four wheel drive ambulances are available.
4. The same rules, regulations and guidelines involving normal vehicle operations, with the exceptions noted above, shall still apply during an inclement weather emergency.

B. Heavy Squad

1. During an inclement weather event, only the most experienced squad operators should drive to the call; squad operators must have experience with the use of 388's drop chains; ****Only use the chains on ice/snow****
2. A second operator should be on board for responses during severe weather.

Transport:

When the Inclement Weather Policy is in effect, patients will be transported to the closest medical facility; in most cases, that facility will be CRH. In the event that the plan is not in effect for whatever reason (i.e., night-shift), and criteria do exist that satisfy the Inclement Weather Policy, the AIC has sole discretion as to where patients will be transported. The EMS Director must be contacted at the next appropriate time.