

**Chatham Emergency Squad
Annual Report for 2007**



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Captain**

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Introduction

Chatham Emergency Squad, Inc. (CES) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation founded in 1936. We provide basic emergency medical services to the Chathams, responding to approximately 1200 dispatches a year. CES members are all volunteers and we never charge for our services. CES funds come primarily from donations, augmented by annual funding by Chatham Township and Chatham Borough. We can be found on the Internet at chathamemergencysquad.org.

In 2007, the Constitution, By-Laws, Standing Rules of Operation and Standing Rules of Administration were updated. These substantially revised governing documents were unanimously adopted by the voting membership.

Affiliation

The Chatham Emergency Squad is a private self-governing corporation unaffiliated with any municipality or agency. We are a member of the New Jersey State First Aid Council and cooperate closely with the following local organizations:

- Chatham Borough Police Department
- Chatham Township Police Department
- Chatham Borough Fire Department
- Chatham Township Fire Department
- Green Village Volunteer Fire Department
- Atlantic Health System

Beyond cooperation in the field, the Squad provides the police with medical supplies such as oxygen and masks. We also create and file the appropriate reports when police defibrillators are used.

Mission

The mission of the Chatham Emergency Squad has six elements:

- To render emergency basic life support and ambulance transportation for Chatham Borough and Township residents and visitors in the event of accident or sudden illness.
- To transport Chatham residents whose health requires non-emergency ambulance transportation to and from hospitals or nursing homes (when such transport can be accomplished without reducing emergency coverage below acceptable levels).
- To render assistance to Chatham residents in such matters as moving helpless, sick, injured or elderly people to and from automobiles or upper floors of homes.

- To provide an on-site ambulance and crew for community events (such as football games and road races) where the likelihood of injury is heightened.
- To participate in emergency disaster work as requested by emergency management authorities.
- To assist neighboring communities when their ambulances are not available.

Qualifications and Training

Every CES member providing patient care is certified by the State of New Jersey as an Emergency Medical Technician - Basic (EMT-B). This certification requires a 120-hour training course and qualifying test. EMTs are trained in basic emergency care skills including cardiopulmonary resuscitation, automated defibrillation, using definitive airway adjuncts, oxygen therapy, first aid, splinting, assisting patients with certain medications and lifting and moving patients. We are even taught how to deliver babies and have exercised that skill on several occasions.

EMT-Bs must recertify every three years by taking a mandated number of State-certified continuing-education courses. The Squad hosts such courses at our facility each month. Many CES members greatly exceed the required minimum number of courses and seek the broadest possible training.

The standards of Squad membership are considerably more rigorous than simply earning a state certification. New or “Probationary” members must demonstrate an understanding of Squad protocols and prove key skills in the field before being promoted to “Certified” status.

In 2007, the Squad:

- Deployed adult and pediatric epinephrine auto-injectors on the ambulances. Each EMT member was required to take specialized training in their use. Medical direction in the training regimen was provided by the Physician Member.
- Installed MIRS radios on the ambulances. All members were trained in their use.
- Developed new protocols for providing support at working fires with emphasis on fire fighter rehabilitation. These guidelines were developed in close coordination with the fire chiefs. The Squad continues to train jointly with the fire departments.
- Inaugurated and substantially completed program to achieve compliance with Department of Homeland Security mandated National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Operations

In 2007, the Squad responded to 1122 dispatches, marking a slight downturn from a recent increasing trend (from 1052 in 2003 to 1200 in 2005). The 1122 dispatches included 646 to the Township, 449 to the Boro, and 27 as mutual aid to other towns (including 8 to Madison and 8 to Summit). CES responses to nursing homes and assisted-living facilities included 113 to King James, 43 to Juniper Village, and 5 to Garden Terrace.

CES responded to 721 medical calls (where the patient is ill) and 360 trauma calls (where the patient is injured). The remainder of calls was to support fire scenes (16 calls) and non-emergency patient transports (25 calls).

In addition to these emergent and patient service calls, CES also provides ambulance coverage and EMT presence at CHS football games and community gatherings such as parades, street fairs, road races and graduations. This presence is often bolstered and made more flexible by the deployment of the Bike Unit.

The Quality Improvement Committee monitors our field operations by reviewing written call sheets to ascertain performance and documentation. Feed back and suggestions are provided to crew chiefs.

Operations are supported by fifteen member-staffed committees. These committees are: Bike Unit, Buildings and Grounds, Communications, Computer, Delegates, Fund Drive, First Aid Supplies, Membership, Oxygen, Public Relations, Quality Improvement, Rig Maintenance, Training, Social and Uniforms. Time spent on emergency calls is but a small fraction of the service given by the members to maintain the enterprise.

Membership Status

CES currently has 79 members in the following categories:

- Forty-six full-time members (Certified and Probationary), serving one 12-hour shift per week plus weekend duty.
- Eleven Cadets who are high-school students serving one 3-hour shift per week.
- One on leave of absence.
- Seven Auxiliary members helping with the administrative burdens of the Squad.
- Thirteen students away at college or graduate school.
- One Physician Member.

While the current membership of the Squad is strong, Chatham is not immune to the factors negatively impacting – and in some cases imperiling – volunteer ambulance companies across the state. Retaining current members and attracting new members is the single greatest concern of the organization.

Financial Status

CES resources come from five sources:

- Voluntary contributions from Chatham residents, merchants and civic organizations.
- Bequests and “in memory of” gifts.
- Funding from the Chatham Borough and Chatham Township municipal governments (each providing about 5% of our annual budget)
- Specific purpose grants received from private foundations and charitable organizations
- Contribution of time and talent by the Squad membership without pay.

The Squad’s annual fund drive is a community-wide appeal primarily through direct mail. At present, total income meets current needs. There are no financial issues.

In addition to providing some funding for operations, Chatham Borough and Chatham Township jointly fund the Squad’s Length of Service Award Program (LOSAP) - a monetary recognition for individual Squad member service to the community.

Assets

CES owns and operates three ambulances, replaced periodically to limit each ambulance’s service life to a targeted ten years. In April 2007, a new Road Rescue Type III ambulance was put in service allowing the retirement of the 1992 Braun.

CES owns two buildings: one at 45 Spring Street in the Township (housing two ambulances) and another at 31 N. Passaic Avenue in the Borough (housing one ambulance). Both facilities are in excellent condition with the Borough facility having undergone a major upgrade in 2005 – 2006. Significant 2007 improvements included: the re-paving of the Township driveway and parking areas, major tree trimming and upgrade of electrical systems.

Our other assets are the customary equipment for an enterprise of our type: radios, pagers, uniforms, office equipment, computers and first-aid equipment and supplies.

Future Plans

- Aggressively recruit new members. The Squad will guard against the fate suffered by some neighboring communities which have been forced to resort to paid ambulance coverage in the absence of sufficient volunteers.
- Continue to maintain and upgrade our physical plant.
- Continue our practice of an annual fund drive to assure that we have the resources to maintain and improve our physical plant and rolling stock.
- Maintain our high standard of patient care. We will continue and enhance our Quality Improvement activities. The Squad will avail itself of the best possible training.
- Increase public awareness of the Squad through the local media.
- Expand scope of NIMS training for line officers to ICS-level 300.
- Pursue funding for and deploy carbon monoxide oximeters.

Summary

The Chatham Emergency Squad is in excellent condition in terms of membership, finances and physical plant. It is a strong and proud organization committed to its mission. There are no immediate issues or concerns of which our stakeholders in the community should be aware. The Squad does, however, call on the community and its leadership to support in any way possible the attraction of volunteer members.