

Chatham Emergency Squad Annual Report

**February 22, 2012
Sam Francis, Captain**

Introduction

Chatham Emergency Squad, Inc. (CES) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation founded in 1936 that provides basic emergency medical services to the Chathams, responding to approximately 1200 emergency medical calls per year. Members are all volunteers and we never charge for our services. CES funds come primarily from donations, augmented by a small amount of annual funding from Chatham Borough and Chatham Township, with occasional grants for equipment purchases. We also benefit from worker's compensation insurance provided by Chatham Borough and Chatham Township. We can be found on the internet at chathamemergencysquad.org.

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 Volunteer Fire Department
- Green Village Volunteer Fire Department
- Atlantic Health System
- Morris County EMS Captains Alliance
- Morris County Communications Center

Beyond cooperation in the field, CES 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 major elements:

- To render basic emergency 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, road races and other sporting events) where the likelihood of injury is heightened.

- To participate in emergency disaster work as requested by emergency management authorities and to provide firefighter rehabilitation at fire scenes.
- To assist neighboring communities when their squads cannot respond.

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 completion of an extensive training course of over 200 hours, culminating in the New Jersey State qualifying test. EMT-Bs are trained in basic emergency-care skills including cardiopulmonary resuscitation, automated defibrillation, using airway adjuncts, oxygen therapy, first aid, splinting, assisting patients with certain medications, administering epinephrine via Squad-owned epi-pens, and lifting and moving patients. Members are even taught how to deliver babies and have exercised that skill on several occasions, though not recently.

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

The standards of CES membership are considerably more rigorous than simply earning a State EMT-B certification. New members enter as “probationary members” and must demonstrate an understanding of CES protocols and prove key skills in the field before being promoted to certified status, a process that takes up to 18 months.

Highlights of 2011

- Transitioned to dispatch by Morris County Communications Center. Borough went live in January and Township in March. Trained members in new procedures and protocols.
- Operated through two major storms, a hurricane in August and a snow/ice storm in October, requiring full mobilization of the Squad and increased numbers of calls. Several times we had three ambulances on the road. Our Township building was used as a warming shelter for several days during the snow/ice storm while power was out to most residences.
- Conducted CPR classes at Chatham High School for teachers.
- Furthered the excellent partnership with police and fire departments. Conducted multiple drills with fire departments and supported several working fires by providing patient care and firefighter rehabilitation. Scheduled CPR recertification for police and fire departments, and provided classes in use of EMS equipment at scenes.
- Upgraded first-aid equipment, including new portable suction units for ambulances, new Squad blankets to augment hospital supplies, and new state-of-the-art defibrillators to replace an obsolete model.

Operations

In 2011, CES responded to 1170 dispatches, essentially the same as in the prior year. The dispatches included 657 to the Township, 484 to the Borough, and 29 as mutual aid to other towns.

The 1170 total includes 67 dispatches to Juniper Village, 64 to King James Care Center, 9 to Garden Terrace Nursing Home, and 2 to Victorian Garden Adult Day Center.

CES responded to 782 medical calls (where the patient is ill) and 345 trauma calls (where the patient is injured). The remaining calls were to support fire scenes (29 calls) and non-emergency patient transports (14 calls).

In addition to these emergency 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 Patient Care Reports to enhance performance and documentation. Ongoing feedback, training and suggestions are provided to crew chiefs and their crews.

Operations are supported by three operational Lieutenants and five administrative Vice Presidents who supervise 20 managerial functions, staffed by members who also are full-fledged EMTs serving on regular duty shifts. The managers who fulfill these functions are:

Quality Improvement Manager	Driving Instructor
Delegates Manager	Treasurer
Bike Unit Manager	Fund Drive Manager
Ambulance Maintenance Manager	Insurance Manager
Electronics Equipment Manager	Public Relations Manager
First-Aid Equipment Manager	Social Events Manager
Oxygen Equipment Manager	Food Services Manager
Uniforms Manager	Building and Grounds Manager
Cadets Manager	Computer Systems Manager
Training Courses Manager	Archivist/Historian

Time spent on emergency calls is but a fraction of the service given by the members to maintain the enterprise.

As has long been the case, the role of the Squad in the community is greater than its explicit mission. In 2011, CES sponsored four blood drives in Chatham, yielding 130 pints of blood, and also offered blood pressure checks at the Farmer's Market. CES sponsored free CPR and first aid courses for residents. The holiday "Snow Village" was enjoyed by the public through a series of open houses. CES hosted numerous building and ambulance tours for local groups including Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. All of these activities will be repeated, and likely expanded, in 2012.

Membership Status

Sufficient new members joined in 2011 to offset attrition. CES has 89 members in the following categories:

- 51 full-time members (certified and probationary), serving one 12-hour shift per week plus weekend duty.
- 10 cadets who are high-school students serving one 3-hour shift per week.
- 6 members on leave of absence.
- 13 auxiliary members helping with the administrative burdens of the Squad.
- 8 students away at college or graduate school.
- 1 physician member.

While the current membership of the Squad is strong, CES is not immune to the factors negatively impacting, and in some cases imperiling, volunteer ambulance companies in neighboring communities and across the state. The squad prides itself on its spirit of “neighbors helping neighbors.” Thanks to this spirit and the strength of membership, the Squad is able to respond in almost all instances to “duty-crew-out” calls with a second or third ambulance as needed without having to rely on mutual aid from adjacent towns. Retaining current members and attracting new members remains one of the greatest concerns of the organization.

Leadership

Administrative officers elected to serve for calendar year 2012 are:

President Ricky D’Costa
 Finance Vice President Rich Crater
 Communications and Social Events VP Janice Camelotto
 Facilities Vice President Mike Lemons
 Personnel Vice President Connie Hartman
 Secretary Christine Grobert

Line officers elected to serve for calendar year 2012 are:

Captain Sam Francis
 Operations Lieutenant John Grobert
 Equipment Lieutenant Missy Cotter
 Training Lieutenant Cathy Warbrick

Financial Status

CES financial resources come from four sources:

- Voluntary contributions, mostly from Chatham residents, merchants and civic organizations.
- Bequests and “in memory of” gifts.
- Funding from the Borough of Chatham and Township of Chatham municipal governments (each providing about 5% of annual expenses).
- Specific purpose grants received from the municipalities, private foundations and charitable organizations.

The Squad’s annual fund drive is a community-wide appeal primarily through direct mail. At present, total income meets current needs and 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), which is a nominal monetary recognition for an individual Squad member's service to the community. In addition, funding for new communications equipment has recently been funded by the Borough and the Township. CES very much appreciates this funding.

Assets

CES owns and operates three ambulances, replaced periodically to limit each ambulance's service life to a targeted ten years.

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.

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

Future Plans

- Maintain our high standard of patient care. CES will continue to enhance its Quality Improvement activities and avail itself of the best possible training for its members.
- Train our members in the expanded scope of practice which New Jersey has recently implemented for EMTs at our level.
- Procure and issue additional portable radios so that individual responders can communicate with the County dispatch center more effectively.
- Upgrade our policies and practices concerning ambulance cleanliness, sanitizing, and disinfecting.
- Improve our compliance with training required by FEMA and OSHA, including courses in hazardous materials, bloodborne pathogens, and the National Incident Management System (NIMS).
- Aggressively recruit new members.
- Continue to maintain and upgrade our physical plant, including expansion of our generators to power the entirety of both Squad buildings during power outages.
- 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.
- Increase public awareness of CES through the local media.
- Offer CPR and first aid courses to Chatham residents and school faculty to enhance community preparedness and identify potential members.

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. CES does, however, call on the community and its leadership to support in every way possible the attraction of volunteer members.