

October 8, 2009 Buffalo, New York

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Ambulance Controversy Could Lead to Strike



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By Ginger Geoffery

Story Published: Oct 6, 2009 at 6:41 PM EDT

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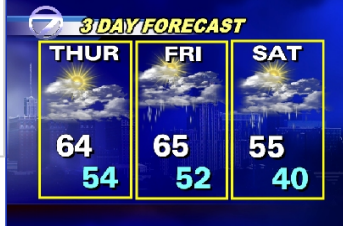
44.0 °
Current Temp
F

Partly Cloudy

Wind : Southwest at 4.6 MPH (4 KT)
Humidity : 85 %
Pressure : 1018.3 mb 1018.3 30.06

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Story Updated: Oct 6, 2009 at 6:41 PM EDT

A dispute over replacing an ambulance that was destroyed in the August flood means residents of Silver Creek are waiting longer for help during emergencies. Some Silver Creek E.M.T.s say they may even strike if they don't get their new ambulance soon. The village had two ambulances but one was ruined in the flood. "It actually floated about 50 feet. The insurance company deemed it unsafe and out of service," says Brandyn Griewisch, Captain/President of the Silver Creek emergency squad, "There was about two feet of muddy water inside (the ambulance)."

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That left Silver Creek with one ambulance to serve some 5,000 people in the village and surrounding areas. Silver Creek now relies on Forestville six-and-a-half miles away for back-up on emergency calls. "For the most part we're going to be waiting a while while someone's

laying there severely hurt and time matters," says Griewisch.

It's a potential life-and-death matter so a new ambulance was quickly ordered in the wake of the flood. That ambulance is now ready to be put into service, but some village trustees are having second thoughts and say a smaller, less expensive vehicle may be more practical.

"The ambulance that's been picked out is an expensive ambulance," says Village Trustee Anna Frederickson, "We have to look at what's suitable for the village, we have to look at what's suitable for the taxpayers and we have to look at what's suitable for the EMTs."

The emergency squad is growing frustrated with the delay. "I understand you've got to look for where the money is but it's getting ridiculous. We need it," says Griewisch.

There's even talk that the EMTs could go on strike if they don't get the ambulance soon. "We don't want to do that to the people but we really need the people to stand behind us and support us when we need this ambulance," explains Griewisch.

"We need to look at all angles of this before we make a decision," says Frederickson, "Hopefully they can get the ambulance they would like and maybe this thing can be settled."



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Jeffrey Freedman Attorneys At

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Sources tell Eyewitness News the strike could happen as soon as this weekend if the issue is not resolved.

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