

# N.Y. Ambulance Service to Phase-Out Medic 'Fly Car'

**By Laura E. Winchester - SUBURBAN CORRESPONDENT**

Buffalo News (New York)

An officer of Twin City Ambulance Service on Tuesday defended his company's decision to replace "fly car" services for Newstead and Akron.

Chief Operating Officer Bryan Brauner said the change would not result in an increase in costs to the community, adding that ambulance services are covered by most insurances, including Medicare Part B.

The fly car, a paramedic-staffed emergency vehicle with no transport capabilities that was always backed up by an ambulance, will be phased out as of July 13. Twin City will provide the services of a new ambulance.

Brauner's comments were in response to concerns voiced about the service change at Monday's Akron Village Board meeting by Akron Fire Chief Dan Kowalik. He asked if the village and town attorneys could investigate whether the change was a breach of Twin City's contract that expires in 2012.

Some village officials also raised questions about the possibility of increased costs to the community. Similar concerns were raised by Newstead Fire Chief Scott Zitzka a week earlier before the Newstead Town Board.

Both fire companies have an ambulance staffed by its volunteers. But Kowalik said fire companies across the state have difficulties staffing their ambulances because of the rigorous training required to be a paramedic and long wait times at hospitals for admissions.

Brauner said the service change will result in "better service and faster response time to all residents of Newstead and Akron."

He said, "The paramedic ambulance is the industry standard for emergency services and we've had no problems" in the transports Twin City has provided for the community.

Twin City's emergency service contract with Akron and Newstead also includes the Village of Williamsville, towns of Amherst and Clarence and the fire districts of Eggertsville, Snyder and Clarence, Brauner said.

Brauner also said Twin City is adding jobs, hiring emergency medical technicians from local communities.