Dear Colleagues,

As you may have heard there has been a transition of officers at NYSVARA, I was selected to fill the vacancy in the office of President when Mike Mastrianni (who has devoted many years of service to NYSVARA) stepped down. Teresa Hamilton (District 1) is serving as Executive Vice President and Adrian Pezzica (District 7) is serving as Membership Secretary. We anticipate filling the vacancies in the offices of Vice President and Secretary shortly.

**Pulse Check 2017**
– Mark Your Calendars and Save the Date - the association’s Annual Educational conference and Trade Show is set for September 21-24 at the Albany Marriott on Wolf Road.

**Legislative Day 2017**
– Another Mark Your Calendar day – Monday May 8 – join us in Albany at the State Capitol and help the NYS Legislature understand EMS. It is important to educate legislators and their staff members so they understand EMS to create legislation that supports our profession and improves patient care and, sometimes more importantly, to avoid legislation that could be detrimental. Anyone interested in participating please e-mail Mike Mastrianni (who is continuing serve as our Legislative Chair) at: legislative@nysvara.org

**New Membership Data Base**
– We have been working on bringing a whole new membership data base on line that has the potential to be an important tool for the association. To be sure there have been a few speed bumps in the process but we are working had to clear them up and get it fully up and running. Regular mail renewal notices are now being sent to all member organizations (squads) who we have not heard back from in response to the e-mail renewal mailings. You can always e-mail membership@nysvara.org to let us know any ongoing issues. Thanks for your patience and cooperation.

**Communication**
– After a hiatus the BLANKET is back. Already this year there have been Special Editions reporting on news from the NYS EMS Council and an Informational Advisory about the new law requiring EMS agencies to check all new applicants against the NYS Sex Offender Registry. Look for more to come. Please also remember on a local level to maintain communications with your local elected officials, your village/town councils etc. You may be doing good work, but letting them know about your ongoing good work can be as important to your ongoing operation.

**On the horizon**
– Keeping watch on what happens with potential changes to health care on both the national and state level.

Regards to all and please be safe.

Henry A. Ehrhardt, President
Pulse Check
NYSVARA
September 21 – September 24, 2017
Albany Marriott

SAVE THE DATE!

PULSE CHECK 2017
A Leading EMS Educational Conference and Trade Show

September 21 – September 24, 2017
Albany Marriott

VISIT
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Always ready.

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Insuring America’s Heroes
NYC 911 SYSTEM EMS AMBULANCE AVERAGE RESPONSE TIMES

NATIONAL GRID OFFERS FREE ON-LINE NATURAL GAS AND ELECTRICAL SAFETY TRAINING

SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS
   NYS VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE & RESCUE ASSOCIATION SCHOLARSHIPS
   ZOLL EMT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
   PIZZI PARAMEDIC SCHOLARSHIP FOR NYC REGION EMS PROVIDERS
   FIREHOUSE SUBS PUBLIC SAFETY FOUNDATION EQUIPMENT GRANTS

NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STATE EMS OFFICIALS
   DISTRACTED DRIVING’S LEGAL CONCERNS FOR EMS

NEWS FROM THE NONPROFIT COORDINATION COMMITTEE OF NEW YORK
   OVERTIME REGULATIONS IN NEW YORK STATE IN EFFECT AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2016
   S2243A BILL WILL SAVE NONPROFITS $$$

NYS DOH BUREAU OF EMS & TRAUMA SYSTEMS INFORMATION
   SEMAC & SEMSCO MEETINGS
   EMS MEMORIAL
   RECENTLY ISSUED DOH BEMS&TS POLICY STATEMENT
   CHECK AND INJECT APPROVED BY DOH COMMISSIONER
   UPDATED NYS DOH BLS PROTOCOLS
   STATEWIDE PROTOCOL UPDATES
   ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS AGAINST CERTIFIED EMS PROVIDERS
   ACTION TAKEN ON ALS SERVICE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE LICENSE REQUIREMENT

NEW YORK STATE NEWS
   VOLUNTEER EMS & FIRE DISABILITY BENEFITS BOOSTED
   MOVE OVER LAW EXPANDED 1/17/17

EMS INDUSTRY – NEWS, NEW PRODUCTS, RECALLS & SHORTAGES
   MULTIPLE COMPANIES TO OFFER EPINEPHRINE AUTO-INJECTOR VERSIONS
   REV GROUP, INC. INCLUDES 8 AMBULANCE BRANDS
   NAXOLINE (NASAL NARCAN) MUCOSAL ADMINISTRATION DEVICE (MAD) RECALL UPDATE
   FDA CLEARS ADAPT PHARMA’S 2MG NASAL NARCAN SPRAY
   FDA CLEARS NEW DEVICE TO MEASURE COMPENSATORY RESERVE INDEX

BITS FROM AROUND THE STATE
NYC 911 SYSTEM EMS AMBULANCE AVERAGE RESPONSE TIMES (Minutes:Seconds)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>Jan 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life threatening emergencies</td>
<td>9:19</td>
<td>9:21</td>
<td>9:01</td>
<td>9:12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All medical emergencies</td>
<td>11:31</td>
<td>11:59</td>
<td>10:51</td>
<td>11:10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


To address rising ambulance response times the NYC mayor announced a proposed fiscal year 2017 budget that allocates $5.4 million for several EMS specific items:

- 9 new FDNY EMS 8 hour ambulance tours in Queens to replace tours formerly staffed by voluntary hospital crews.
- 6 FDNY EMS 8 hour tours dedicated to the 10 jail facilities on Rikers Island. These would be 3 ALS and 3 BLS.
- Bronx pilot initiative involving a fly car model that consists of two Paramedics, one being a supervisor (Lt). This is expected to bring down response times to segments 1-3 life threatening calls by as much as 23 seconds.
- Bronx resources being increased with 5 additional BLS ambulances that would run 12 hours each to help address the neighborhoods experiencing the heaviest call volume and response time in the city with the goal of reducing response time by 11 seconds.

The city invested $20 million dollars last fiscal year to add 45 new FDNY EMS ambulance tours to parts of the Bronx, Queens and Staten Island, while also adding 149 positions for Emergency Medical Dispatchers to handle the increased call volume.

Local 2507 reported on 1/4/17 that FDNY EMS will actually be adding a total of 50 tours in January 2017 with 36 assigned to Queens and 14 to the Bronx.

NOTE: (1) The NYC 911 System includes both FDNY EMS and contract ambulances from voluntary hospital’s EMS ambulances. (2) Volunteer ambulances from the city’s 28 VACs, 5 VFDs and 3 colleges as well as commercial services respond to emergencies called into their individual 10 digit phone numbers and are not included in the above 911 statistics and not utilized in day-to-day mutual aid.

NATIONAL GRID OFFERS FREE ON-LINE NATURAL GAS AND ELECTRICAL SAFETY TRAINING

National Grid has developed and offers a self-directed, interactive online training package that provides emergency response personnel with the information they need to safely identify and respond to incidents that may involve natural gas and electric power lines and other facilities.

This entire web-based e-training program for first responders includes a series of educational modules, which you can complete at your own pace. These are followed by online interactive quizzes that test your understanding of the training material.

Successfully complete the online training and the company’s advanced learning management system will generate a personalized Certificate of Completion. Such a certificate demonstrates mastery of a subject area and may satisfy additional training hours required by your department.

The modules include:

- Natural gas safety basics
- Natural gas leaks
- Natural gas fires
- Training tools

And

- Electrical safety basic
- Electric distribution system
- Fires involving electrical facilities
- Downed power lines
- Car-pole accidents
- Substation fires
- Training tools

To access the training website go to: [http://firstresponder.ngridsafety.com/](http://firstresponder.ngridsafety.com/)
EMS Memorial Dedication
Empire State Plaza
May 23, 2017 · 11:00 am

Please join us for remembrance of our fallen Emergency Medical Services Providers

Stephanie B. Potter
Moira Volunteer Fire and Rescue
November 26, 2016

Norman Valle
FDNY EMS
January 6, 2016

Larry Fuller
Hunter Ambulance, Inc.
April 20, 2016

For further information, including group attendance or emergency vehicle registration, please contact Donna Johnson at 518-402-0996.
SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS

NYSSVA&RA SCHOLARSHIPS
The NYSSVA&RA annually provides up to 3 scholarships to applicants who are members (youth or adult) of a member of a squad in good standing in the NYSSVA&RA. These scholarships must be used by applicants to further their education in an accredited institution of higher education. Depending upon funding, these scholarships range from $500.00 to $1,000.00. For additional information go to http://nysvarola.org/forms/scholarshipApplication.pdf

ZOLL EMT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM
The filing period for the ZOLL Manufacturing Corporation, an Asahi Kasei Group Company that manufactures medical devices and related software solutions, is now open.

The intent of the ZOLL EMT Scholarship Program is to award medical education grants annually to up to 12 qualifying caregivers who demonstrate a career commitment to the profession. The goal of the program is to support the education of EMTs (EMT-Basic, EMT-Advanced) who are working toward their paramedic certification (EMT-P).

Qualified applicants must be employed (or volunteer) as an EMT-Basic or an EMT-Advanced by a licensed EMS service and have no less than 2,500 hours of field experience. Applicants must submit a complete application by April 14 to be considered for a grant. A complete application includes:

• Personal work history (EMS experience, license number, awards, recognitions, etc.)
• Completion of a brief 250-word essay
• Endorsement/reference from an EMS director

Awards will be paid to the qualifying training program on behalf of the award recipient at the conclusion of the academic period after successful completion of the coursework (B or better, or Pass on a Pass/Fail scale). Individuals may apply annually, but are limited to one award in a three-year period. Payments cannot be made directly to any individual award recipients (i.e., health care professional or program participant).

Candidates can submit their applications online at www.zoll.com/EMTScholarship between now and April 14. The winners will be announced during EMS Week in May 2017.

PIZZI PARAMEDIC SCHOLARSHIP FOR NYC REGION EMS PROVIDERS
The Walter F. Pizzi EMS Scholarship was developed as part of an ongoing effort to ensure the world’s largest EMS System is served by some of the most highly trained EMS professionals today. This award will be given to an EMS provider who has demonstrated exceptional dedication to patient care for the purpose of advancing his or her certification to the Paramedic level. The scholarship amount is for $3,000 to be used to assist in tuition payment for a New York State certified Paramedic program.

Applicant(s) must be a current Certified New York State EMT-Basic working/volunteering in the New York City region and have a minimum of three (3) years experience working/volunteering as an EMT-Basic on an ambulance in the NYC region. Application deadline is 4/3/17. For more information on requirements and an application go to http://nycremsco.org/images/articleserver/Scholarship%20Eligibility%20and%20Application%202017.pdf

FIREHOUSE SUBS PUBLIC SAFETY FOUNDATION EQUIPMENT GRANTS
Firehouse of America, LLC, headquartered in Jacksonville, FL, announced that it will donate 0.13% of purchases made in 2017 at all US Firehouse Subs locations to the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation. This percentage will result in a minimum donation of one million dollars. Since the Foundation started in 2005, it has granted over $24 million to provide equipment, training and support to hometown heroes in 46 states and 2,725 benefiting organizations. Equipment donated has included, AEDs, automated CPR devices, EMS bicycles, bunker gear, thermal imaging cameras, gas detectors, SCBA, ATVs, extrication tools, etc.

Quarterly Application Deadlines:
• Thursday, March 2, 2017 at 5:00 PM EST for 2nd Quarter Grants
• Friday, June 2, 2017 at 5:00 PM EST for 3rd Quarter Grants
• Thursday, September 7, 2017 at 5:00 PM EST for 4th Quarter Grants
• Friday, December 1, 2017 at 5:00 PM EST for 1st Quarter Grants (Q1 2018)

For more information and a link to the grant application go to: http://www.firehousesubs.com/public-safety-foundation/

Firehouse Subs web site shows the company has outlets in NYS in Buffalo (2), Camillus, Centereach, Ithaca, Levittown and Niagara Falls.
Savvik Buying Group is affiliated with the New York State Volunteer Ambulance and Rescue Association (NYSVARA)… therefore, if your service is part of the NYSVARA, you are part of us! NYSVARA members automatically become members of Savvik. We share revenue! A percentage of your purchases are returned to the NYSVARA, which helps the NYSVARA support other projects.

Savvik Buying Group is made up of more than 5,400 Public Safety organizations that have joined together to take advantage of volume pricing discounts on a wide array of Public Safety products and services. As a NYSVARA member, you will have the opportunity to share in these discounts.

Are you tired of paying catalog prices? If so, Savvik can help you!

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- Billing & Collection Services
- Cardiac Arrest Treatment Bag
- Defibrillators/AEDs & ALS Monitors
- EMS Legal Services & Seminars
- Fleet Fuel Cards
- Gas Sensing Tech–CO & LEL Monitors
- Rugged Computers
- Medical Supplies & Equipment
- Patient & Customer Satisfaction Surveys
- Promotional Clothing & Items
- Uniforms and Apparel
- Office Supplies, Equipment, Furniture
- Panasonic Toughbooks
- Maintenance Supplies

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DISTRACTED DRIVING’S LEGAL CONCERNS FOR EMS

Traffic is difficult enough to maneuver for EMS teams without having to deal with distracted drivers. Since the introduction of mobile devices, accidents caused by distracted driving have spiked, and it affects EMS drivers, too. According to Distraction.gov, 660,000 drivers are using cell phones or electronic devices while driving at any given daylight moment. This number has held steady since 2010. Statistics for EMS drivers also show a lot of electronics use, with 26 percent admitting to using a mobile device while driving and 53 percent admitting to still using one even though they know the safety risks. In addition to the serious threat to life, departments also need to take into account the legal and insurance issues they may face. Many states now have limitations on drivers using mobile devices while driving. If an EMS driver is found to have been using one and they are at fault for the accident, insurance may not cover the damages. Worse, in some states the insurer may cancel or not renew the policy. This makes the liability risk greater. In addition to the above, accidents involving apparatus are newsworthy; if the driver is found to have been using a cell phone at the time, the public and political scrutiny will be even more intense. Departments should frame policy to minimize distracted driving of any kind, and could enact a “sterile cockpit” model from the airline industry. Minimizing distractions to drivers is key to the safety of the patient, the public, and the crew.

OVERTIME REGULATIONS IN NEW YORK STATE IN EFFECT AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2016

Federal overtime regulations are currently on hold while the U.S. District Court in Texas moves forward with the case. However, with three days’ notice, on December 28, 2016, New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) finalized its own overtime rules, increasing salaries for administrative and executive work and the number of workers who will qualify for overtime pay.

The new salaries differ based on size and geographic location of the employer, and the salary thresholds will increase incrementally over the next six years. Effective December 31, 2016, the new salary thresholds are:

- New York City: $825 per week ($42,900 annually) for employers with 11 or more employees ("large employers"); this amount will increase annually until it reaches $1,125 per week ($58,500) on December 31, 2018 for large employers and December 31, 2019 for employers with 10 or fewer employees.
- Nassau, Suffolk, and Westchester counties: $750 per week ($39,000 annually); this amount will increase annually until it reaches $1,125 per week ($58,500) on December 31, 2021.
- Other parts of New York: $727.50 per week ($37,830 annually); this amount will increase annually until it reaches $937.50 per week ($48,750 annually) on December 31, 2020.
- This raises pay from the former NYSDOL rates of $675 per week ($35,100 per year)

Executive and administrative employees who are currently paid less than the new salary threshold (based on number of employees and location) can either:

- increase those salaries to the new minimum beginning with the paycheck or direct deposit covering December 31, 2016; or
- convert exempt employees earning less than the new salary threshold to non-exempt (and therefore eligible for overtime) beginning with the first day of the workweek in which December 31 falls.

S2243A BILL WILL SAVE NONPROFITS $$$

On September 29, 2016, Governor Cuomo signed S2243A into effect, to “authorize not-for-profit corporations that provide a service to a county to make purchases or to contract for certain services through the county which the not-for-profit has a contract with.” This bill is designed to save costs by allowing nonprofits that provide services for their respective counties to make purchases through county contracts.
SEMAG & SEMSCO MEETINGS

The Bureau has completed negotiations with the Hilton Garden Inn-Troy NY, for the upcoming 2017-2018 Council Meetings. The dates are as follows:

- May 9-10, 2017
- September 26-27, 2017
- January 9-10, 2018

Meetings are open to the public. Those who do not want to travel to Troy to attend the meetings can go to the DOH web page at http://www.health.ny.gov/events/webcasts/ and view live webcasts or recordings of the meetings.

EMS MEMORIAL

The 2017 EMS Memorial will take place on Tuesday, May 23 at 11:00 AM at the Empire State Plaza in Albany, NY.

RECENTLY ISSUED DOH BEMS&TS POLICY STATEMENT

17-01 Advanced Standing in EMS Certification Programs – 2/8/17: The purpose of this Policy Statement is to delineate procedures for granting Advanced Standing in Emergency Medical Services certification courses (Basic EMT, Advanced EMT, EMT-Critical Care and EMT-Paramedic), excluding Certified First Responder.

CHECK AND INJECT APPROVED BY DOH COMMISSIONER

On 2/7/17 Lee Burns, Director of BEMS&TS, sent out the following notice: Today I received notification that the Commissioner has approved the epinephrine Check and Inject for Emergency Medical Technicians. This is very exciting and positive for New York State’s EMS community! With this good news in mind, there are a number of questions that remain to be addressed. Specifically, BLS protocols, training programs and options/availability, the supplying of the epinephrine and the obtaining of syringes outside of the specifically marked version. We have our work cut out for us! Thanks for all of your work and support!

UPDATED NYS DOH BLS PROTOCOLS

The current version of the NYS BLS protocols has been updated to include the newest General Approach section. Version 16.04 can be found at: http://health.ny.gov/professionals/ems/protocol.htm

STATEWIDE PROTOCOL UPDATES

Based on the success of the 2015 Spinal Restriction Protocol Update that provided (after sorting out Windows 10 and webex compatibility issues) web based cognitive training to over 40,000 EMS personnel, the NYS DOH plans to have a state-wide update in the late spring or early summer. This will afford sponsors and instructors time to implement the changes in their curricula for fall courses. This also allows the BEMS&TS and its testing contractor to make any necessary adjustments to the written certification exams. The updates will be provided on the BEMS&TS Learning Management System.

In the past, updates were rolled out as approved. This can cause confusion amongst providers and is also not an efficient way for BEMS&TS, agencies, sponsors, and providers to assure they have the most up-to-date information. Regional protocols that conflict with or modify statewide protocols and can cause their own confusion among providers will evidently continue.

The BLS Final Practical Skills Exam Manual has been updated to reflect all recent changes. The following 2 pages have been updated on the DOH web site:

http://www.health.ny.gov/professionals/ems/national_education_standards_transition/

This now includes:

- BLS Practical Skills Examination - Administrative Manual (PDF)
- Practical Skills Exam Matrix – All levels (PDF)

This update is:

- BLS Practical Skills Examination - Administrative Manual (PDF)
- The station sheets are also now included within the manual.

Paramedic Program Directors will soon be receiving information from the NREMT regarding the Psychomotor Authorization to Test (PATT) process. The PATT process will be broken down in to two sections. One is for those states that allow students to take the PSE prior to the end of the course and the other is for those states that do not allow this type of early testing. Most states, including NYS, do
not allow early PSE testing. There really is no change for Course Sponsors regarding the NYS PSE other than following the NREMT processes online. Since there is really no changes in NYS, if there are any questions or concerns regarding the NREMT new process, PLEASE CONTACT NREMT.

ENFORCEMENT ACTIONS AGAINST EMS PROVIDERS

In 2016 the Bureau of EMS & Trauma Services was involved in over 700 investigations. No EMS agencies were sanctioned or disciplined in 2016 but there were 9 disciplinary actions imposed on individual EMS providers. The DOH web site shows the following postings:

- 3/29/16 – EMT # 411750 - Violations of 10 NYCRR Part 800.16(a)(7) - Suspended for one year effective 3/14/16. The suspension is stayed. Assessed a civil penalty of $2,000. Of that amount $1,750 is suspended.
- 3/30/16 – EMT # 405689 - Violations of 10 NYCRR Part 800.16(5) - Revoked effective 3/14/16.
- 4/4/16 – EMT # 413076 - Violations of 10 NYCRR Part 800.16(a)(7) - EMT certification suspended for one (1) year effective 3/30/16. The suspension is stayed. Assessed a civil penalty of $2,000. Of that amount $1,750 is suspended.
- 5/31/16 – EMT # 310556 - Violations of 10 NYCRR Part 800.16(10) - Suspended for one (1) year. The suspension is stayed for three (3) years effective 3/14/16. Assessed a civil penalty of $2,000.
- 7/25/16 – EMT # 237696 - For violations of 10 NYCRR Part 800.16(e) - Suspended. The suspension is deemed to have been served concurrently with his last day of employment on 10/11/13 and ending on 7/5/16. Assessed a civil penalty of $1,000. The penalty is stayed pending a period of probation. Placed on probation for two (2) years effective 7/5/16.
- 8/15/16 – EMT # 168767 - For violations of 10 NYCRR Part 800.16(a)(13) - Suspended for one (1) year. Two (2) months deemed to have been served concurrently with his period in restricted status with his employer. The remaining ten (10) months are stayed pending no further violations for three (3) years. Assessed a civil penalty of $2,000. $1,500 shall be suspended pending no further violations for three (3) years.
- 10/20/16 – EMT # 307098 - Violations of 10 NYCRR Part 800.16 (a) (1) and 800.16 (a) (4). - Revoked effective 10/5/2016. Assessed a civil penalty of $5,000.
- 11/10/16 - EMT # 400015 - Violations of 10 NYCRR Part 800.16(4) and 800.3(ap). - Suspended effective 11/8/16. The suspension is for a period deemed to have been served concurrently with his patient restriction status with his employer. Assessed a civil penalty of $2,000. Of that amount, $1,000 is suspended.
- 12/21/16 – EMT # 300531 - For violations of 10 NYCRR Part 800.16(a)(7) - Revoked effective 12/20/16. The revocation is stayed. Assessed a civil penalty of $3,000 of which $1,000 is suspended.

ACTION TAKEN ON ALS SERVICE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE LICENSE REQUIREMENT

The BEMS&TS on 1/31/17 sent notices to Chairs of the Regional Emergency Medical Advisory Committees (REMAC) requesting they advise agencies which are not in compliance with Part 800.5(d)(4), that they may no longer operate at the EMT-Critical Care or EMT-Paramedic level. They may continue to operate at the EMT level, or if they so desire, may make application to your REMAC to operate at the AEMT level. There were 28 ALS agencies remaining statewide that lacked Controlled Substance Licenses or had not begun the process to obtain one.

NEW YORK STATE NEWS

VOLUNTEER EMS & FIRE DISABILITY BENEFITS BOOSTED

Volunteer ambulance workers firefighters will receive a $200 increase in disability benefits thanks to a new state law. The measure (S1000D/A5133C) signed by Gov. Andrew Cuomo on 11/4/16 amends the Volunteer Ambulance Workers Benefit Law (VAWBL) and Volunteer Firefighters Benefit Law (VFBL) to provide disabled emergency workers up to $600 a week in compensation starting 1/1/17. Disabled volunteer workers currently receive compensation benefits of up to $400 a week, an amount that has remained stagnant for the past 18 years despite inflation and the rising cost of living, the bill's sponsors said. "Every day the brave men and women who make up New York's volunteer firefighter and ambulance forces selflessly and courageously put themselves in harm's way in the name of serving and protecting their communities," Assembly Majority Leader Joseph Morelle, D-Irondequoit, Monroe County, who sponsored the bill, said in a statement.
MOVE OVER LAW EXPANDED 1/17/17

S7938/A8702A became effective 1/17/17 and expanded the “Move Over Law” to include volunteer ambulance workers and firefighters who have vehicles at the scene of a roadside emergency displaying flashing blue or green lights.

The law previously required drivers to slow down and use caution when approaching an emergency vehicle with red and/or white emergency lighting and hazard vehicles with amber lights. On highways with multiple lanes, drivers must move from the lane immediately next to the emergency or hazard vehicle, unless traffic prevents the driver from doing this safely. Those who violate the law face a $275 fine and 3 points marked on their license.

Volunteers responding to an emergency with green or blue lights not considered emergency vehicles under the Vehicle & Traffic Law and are expected to obey all traffic laws.

EMS INDUSTRY – NEWS, NEW PRODUCTS, RECALLS & SHORTAGES

MULTIPLE COMPANIES TO OFFER EPINEPHRINE AUTO-INJECTOR VERSIONS

New major competitors to the $609.00 2-pack Mylan branded Epi-Pen in the epinephrine auto-injector market are available or expected in the coming months:

- CVS Health will be marketing a 2-pack of the generic version of Adrenaclick from Impax laboratories for $109.99.

- Auvi-Q injectors made by Keleo with voice prompts are expected to be back on the market in mid to late February 2017 after being recalled in 2015 because of issues with administering complete doses. The list price is given as $4,500.00 but a company affordability program may enable those with government or commercial insurance and with household incomes under $100,000 to pay $0. The cash price for patients without insurance is expected to be $360.00 for a 2-pack including 1 trainer device. Insurance carriers and pharmacy benefit managers like Humana, Express Scripts, Cigna, Optum and Aetna, however, are balking at the pricing strategy.

- Mylan, the company charging over $600.00 for the branded Epi-Pen itself, has launched a generic version at a price of $300.00 for a 2-pack.

Consumers can get coupons or other discounts to help pay for the auto-injectors but EMS agencies will likely be hit with the list prices.

NYS EMS agencies do have the Check & Inject option available which was formally approved by the Commissioner of Health. The syringe kits in the demonstration project period were supplied by the University of Rochester at a cost of $75.00 for 2 administration kits and 1 training kit.

REV GROUP, INC. INCLUDES 8 AMBULANCE BRANDS

Over the years there has been a consolidation of the major ambulance brands. REV Group, headquartered in Milwaukee, WI, has been a major player and currently controls:

- American Emergency Vehicles (AEV), Jefferson, NC
- Frontline Emergency Vehicles, Winter Park, FL
- Horton Ambulance, Grove City, OH
- Marque Ambulance, Winter Park, FL
- McCoy Miller, Winter Park, FL
- Road Rescue, Winter Park, FL
- Wheeled Coach, Winter Park FL
- Leader Emergency Vehicles, El Monte, CA

On the fire side, REV also controls E-One and KME. In total, REV controls 27 brands, manufacturing 240,000 vehicles annually and employs 5,000 people at a dozen locations. Ambulance manufacturers not in the REV Group include:
• Braun Ambulances, Van Wert, OH
• Crestline Coach, Ltd., Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada
• Demers Ambulances, Beloeil, Quebec, Canada
• Excellance, Inc., Madison, AL
• Frazer, Ltd., Houston, TX
• Life Line Emergency Vehicles, Summer, IA
• Malley Industries, Dieppe, New Brunswick, Canada
• Medix Specialty Vehicles, Elkhart, IN
• Miller Coach Company, Springfield, MO
• Osage Industries, Linn, MO
• PL Custom Emergency Vehicles, Manasquan, NJ
• Taylor Made Ambulances, Newport, AR

NAXOLINE (NASAL NARCAN) MUCOSAL ADMINISTRATION DEVICE (MAD) RECALL UPDATE
In late 2016 Teleflex Medical issued an update to its recall of MAD30 administration devices as some customers indicated that, due to medical necessity, they plan to continue using the affected lots rather than return them. The problem was that some MAD30 devices delivered a concentrated straight stream rather than an fine mist atomized spray. Teleflex issued supplemental instructions allowing nondestructive testing of each unit prior to the procedure to determine if it is defective.

For information on the recall and the lots involved and instructions for testing go to http://www.teleflex.com/global/product-areas/MAD_Atomization_Cust_Notif_and_Ack_Form.pdf

Delivery of a new model MAD301 with a different tip configuration was expected in mid January 2017 but due to limited quantities being available back orders may take a while to catch up. One supplier gave a price of the new MAD301 as $5.30 each or $132.50 for a box of 25.

FDA CLEARS ADAPT PHARMA’S 2MG NASAL NARCAN SPRAY
On 1/25/17 Adapt Pharma issued a press release advising the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved its NARCAN® Nasal Spray as a 2mg formulation for the emergency treatment of known or suspected opioid overdose, as manifested by respiratory and/or central nervous system depression. The company already markets a 4mg/0.1ml nasal spray that instructions call for the entire dose to be administered into 1 nostril and has been approved by the NYS Emergency Medical Advisory Committee and the State Emergency Medical Services Council. It will be some time before the 2mg packages get into distribution. The cost of 2 pack of the 4mg device is about $100.00 but there is no word yet on the cost of the 2mg formulation.

FDA CLEARS NEW DEVICE TO MEASURE COMPENSATORY RESERVE INDEX
Flashback Technologies, Inc. a privately held predictive data analytics technology company, announced 1/4/17 that it has been granted a de novo request by the U.S. FDA to market the first device with its algorithmic product, the Compensatory Reserve Index (CRI™). The company says CRI is a breakthrough hemodynamic parameter that provides real-time noninvasive measurement of a patient’s ability to tolerate changes in intravascular volume, such as blood loss. The FDA granted CRI a new product device classification known as an “adjunctive cardiovascular status indicator.”

The CRI utilizes an algorithm to take information from a standard pulse oximeter placed on the finger of a patient and gauges whether a patient requires resuscitation or immediate medical attention. The algorithm uses continuous PPG (photoplethysmogram) signals, which capture the pulsatile component of the cardiac cycle to estimate CRI values. These are displayed as a simple-to-interpret “fuel gauge” with a trend line. CRI is an adjunctive cardiovascular indicator for areas of care that place a high priority on monitoring hemodynamic status and fluid management, enabling the potential for earlier life-saving interventions and reducing healthcare costs.

No word on when the device will be marked or its price.
ALDEN (VILLAGE OF) EMS DEPARTMENT, Erie County, was audited by the NYS Comptroller to review ambulance service billing and collection procedures for the period June 1, 2013 through July 27, 2016. The report was issued 1/6/17. The Village, which has a population of approximately 2,600, is governed by an elected five-member Board of Trustees. The annual budget for the 2016-17 fiscal year is approximately $2.3 million. The Village of Alden Fire Department actually operates the 2 ambulances at the AEMT level. There were 130 patient transports during the 2015-2016.

Key Recommendations

- Develop and adopt written policies and procedures for ambulance service billing and collection. The procedures should address periodic reconciliations of services rendered, billed and collected and how uncollected accounts are to be handled.
- Consider assigning a Village employee to prepare billings or, if the service is to be contracted out, periodically seek competition.
- Approve and properly document all billing write-offs and adjustments prior to them being made.


AMSTERDAM FIRE DEPARTMENT, Montgomery County, had a change to its charter approved on 1/3/17 by the Amsterdam City Council that would allow the department to provide ambulance service in the city. A city operated ambulance service has been a longtime goal of city officials as a revenue generator, but was shot down via referendum in 2004, at which time language prohibiting such a service was inserted in the Fire Department's charter. The city will purchase or lease ambulance estimated to cost $160,000 and related equipment via a five- or seven-year bond or a lease. City officials project revenue of about $300,000 per year. Currently, in Amsterdam, Greater Amsterdam Volunteer Ambulance Corps (GAVAC), a fully paid ambulance service responds with an EMT staffed ambulance and if ALS care is needed an FD 1st Responder EMT-P rides along to the hospital. Under the proposed new system, GAVAC would only be called if the FD ambulance is unavailable or if simultaneous calls come in. Amsterdam FD has 26 paramedics and 6 EMTs. The city hopes the FD ambulance will be in service by 7/1/17. GAVAC has 10 ambulances and 2 ALS 1st response vehicles, is headquartered next to the Public Service Building in Amsterdam and provides service countywide.

ARLINGTON FIRE DISTRICT, Dutchess County, effective 1/1/17 has contracted with commercial ambulance service Mobile Life Support Services to patient transports. According to the Poughkeepsie Journal, the decision to outsource to the commercial ambulance service, which has been operating in Hudson Valley since 1981, was enacted by the district’s Board of Fire Commissioners. According to a release from the district, patients can expect “to receive a charge for services rendered in an amount that is usual and customary for the provider” and the services may be covered by health insurance plans. Formerly the FD provided free ambulance transports for patients. Using Mobile Life Support Services will allow the Fire District to expand its career firefighting and paramedic coverage to its 4 stations 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Career and volunteer members of the Arlington Fire District will continue providing immediate response to emergency calls. A small reduction in property taxes is included in the FD’s 2017 budget.

Cutchogue Fire Department, Suffolk County, had ambulance 8-5-17 involved in a T-bone collision on County Road 48 during a snow storm on 1/7/17. The collision occurred about 11:40 AM as the ambulance was returning from dropping off a patient at Eastern Long Island Hospital in Greenport. News reports indicate the driver of a 2005 GMC SUV lost control of his vehicle and slid sideways on the roadway and collided with the ambulance. Greenport FD Heavy Rescue responded to remove the SUV’s passenger side door and ambulances from Southold FD and East Marion FD transported the SUV’s driver and 2 teenage sons to ELIH for treatment of minor injuries. The 2 EMTs aboard the ambulance were wearing seat belts and were reportedly not injured; however, the 2005 Ford/Horton Type III ambulance had heavy front end damage possibly including a bent frame. The SUV driver was issued a summons for unlicensed operation. Cutchogue operates 2 ambulances at the ALS level.

FLANDERS-NORTHAMPTON VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE, Suffolk County, is proposing to implement third party billing as a way to offset the burden on local taxpayers in the Town of Southampton. According to local media, the ambulance service responds to about 1,200 calls a year and residents in the three hamlets served (Flanders, Northampton and Riverside) pay between $150 and $200 a year for ambulance services as part of their tax bill. 40 to 50% of calls are for non-residents. Third-party insurance billing would offset about half the ambulance service’s budget, which was about $587,000 in
2016. A squad official estimated that at 1,200 calls a year, the squad would be able to bill about 900 of those calls, because some people aren’t going to have insurance, at $600 per call, which is the median. The Town Supervisor and at least 1 Councilman indicated interest in learning more about the proposal. It has the highest rate of the Towns 4 Ambulance Tax Districts because of non-taxable lands including state, county and town parks, a school, county jail, court and county center and a campus of the Suffolk Community College. The squad had third party billing about 15 years ago but was told by the Town Board at the time to stop. The ambulance squad operates 2 ambulances at the EMT-P level.

HAVERSTRAW VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE CORPS, Rockland County, saw members Teresa A. Hamilton and MaryFrances Ginnity Zayas recognized in a big way with a long article in the Rockland County Times. Captain Teresa A. Hamilton was one of the first Youth Corps members that the HVAC had. Her father and mother were members of the HVAC and she saw their vision and followed in their footsteps. As Captain of HVAC, Teresa has held this position for the second time during her membership and she is now in her 8th year of this position. Her conviction to volunteerism has helped HVAC achieve advancement in equipment for the ambulances that provide the latest in technology for use in the treatment of the community members when sick or injured. MaryFrances Ginnity Zayas, Treasurer of the squad, also has strong family-vested roots in the HVAC. Going as far back as her grandfather, many members including her mother, father, aunts and assorted other members of her family were members, but in her grandfather’s case, a founding member. Read the full article at: http://www.rocklandtimes.com/2016/12/29/unsung-heroes-teresa-a-hamilton-and-maryfrances-ginnity-zayas-haverstraw-ambulance-corps-volunteers/

HUNTINGTON COMMUNITY FIRST AID SQUAD, Suffolk County, in September 2016 was called to a residence in Huntington Station for a child in seizures. Up arrival the crew found a 14 year old male in cardiac arrest. Manual CPR was started and the LUCAS CPR device was applied. An IV was established, the patient was given 3 shocks and meds ordered by Suffolk County Medical Control were administered by the Advanced Life Support provider on scene. The patient was transported to Huntington Hospital. On arrival at the ER the patient had a normal blood pressure, normal heart rhythm and a normal oxygen level. He was subsequently sent by Medivac to Cohen’s Children Hospital in New Hyde Park. The patient was subsequently released with a pace maker and internal defibrillator in place. HCFAS operates 6 ambulances at the EMT-P level 24/7/365 and responds to about 6,000 calls annually.

JAMAICA ESTATES-HOLLISWOOD-SOUTH BAYSIDE VAC, Queens County, was presented with a fully stocked Kiwanis Pediatric Trauma Kit on 1/21/17. The kit is a child-sized ambulance equipment kit compiled to meet most on-scene emergency needs of children. The kits are donated to fire departments and ambulance services under the auspices of the local Kiwanis clubs in each community. A typical kit contains special equipment which ambulance personnel may need to properly care for a small child, as well as a stuffed animal for the child. The ingredients of these kits are child sized and geared for children from infancy to 18 years of age. Since its inceptions, over 250 kits have been donated. For more information on the Kiwanis program including a link to the application go to: http://kiwanispediatrictraumacenter.org/traumakit.htm

MOREAU EMERGENCY SQUAD, Saratoga County, is trying to fund a $1.5 million expansion project to add garage bays to house all 4 ambulances and 2 1st response vehicles. Some community members have questioned squad finances and at a recent public hearing a Town Board member questioned the use of on-call volunteer EMS providers that supplement paid staff. The Board member suggested calling another EMS agency if staff were not inhouse ready to respond when a call comes in. A squad officials opened the books to the Post Star news and explained that standby crews get to the station and on their way within 5 minutes which is well under the response time from an another agency. After 5 minutes dispatchers call on mutual aid which occurred only 0.3% of the time in 2016. Moreau operates at the EMT-P level with a $900,000 annual budget that’s funded partly by Moreau and Northumberland. Moreau chips in $226,000 for operating expenses, including gasoline and utilities. Northumberland pays $83,000, also for operating expenses. Third party billing receipts only covers payroll, which is $500,000 to $600,000 a year. Moreau serves the Town of Moreau, Town of Northumberland and Village of South Glens Falls.
ONEIDA COUNTY saw the merger of 3 squads on 1/1/17. Central Oneida County Volunteer Ambulance Corps which serves 5 townships, joined with southern county squads Waterville Area Volunteer Corps and Oriskany Falls Volunteer Ambulance Corps to add 5 additional municipalities and 500 calls annually to its 4,000 annual responses. The merger was 2 years in the works and included NYS Attorney General approval. All 3 agencies operated at the EMT-P level.

PLATTSBURG FIRE DEPARTMENT, Clinton County, retains $90,000 in overtime funding for a second ambulance crew thanks to a 3-3 stalemate vote at the Common Council. The mayor had wanted to eliminate the funds as there is no second ambulance in service but a councilor said he didn't feel it would be prudent to budget a savings that might be overturned in a grievance proceeding. Plattsburg FD does have 3 ambulances in total and operates at the EMT-P level.

PORT JERVIS VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE CORPS, Orange County, remains in operation thanks to an agreement reached with the City of Port Jervis and the Town of Deerpark. Each municipality made a $15,000 payment to the PJVAC immediately and a second payment of $15,000 from each municipality was made 12/31/16. The first $30,000 installment addressed workers' compensation and vehicle insurance bills and got the ambulance corps running again. The subsequent $30,000 gave PJVAC a cash flow until their receivables come in. After more than 58 years of service the ambulance corps had ceased operation, and was given a state-mandated deadline to get back up and running by 12/8/16 or lose its certification from the New York State Department of Health. In addition to its NYS operations, PJVAC is licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Health to serve Matamoras, PA. The squad operates at the EMT level 24/7 with 3 ambulances.

SOUTH COUNTRY AMBULANCE, Suffolk County, hosted a Suffolk County PD gun buy-back event in October 2016 resulting in the safe removal of 80 handguns, 77 rifles or shotguns and 4 assault rifles from communities in Suffolk County. Local news media indicated Greg Miglino, chief of the ambulance company, said Saturday's buyback was so successful that $3,000 had to be raised through private donations during the event to keep up with demand. A total of $5,000 had been budgeted for the event. Even after the buyback ended people continued to show up and had to be turned away, he said. People were given gift cards in exchange for the weapons — $150 for assault weapons, $100 for handguns, $75 for rifles and shotguns, and $25 for nonworking or antique firearms. Each person received payment for up to three weapons.

SOUTHERN OSWEGO VOLUNTEER AMBULANCE CORPS, Oswego County, entered into a 6 month management agreement with Menter Ambulance covering the corporate aspects of SOVAC with the exception of its Board of Directors. Officially known as the Oswego County Ambulance Service, Menter is a family owned commercial provider headquartered in Fulton and its 90 employees provide primary EMS service to the city of Fulton, Towns of Granby, Volney, Schroeppeal and Hannibal as well as the villages of Hannibal and Phoenix. It has 10 ambulances, 90 employees and handles about 10,000 calls annually. SOVAC provides EMS to the areas of Central Square, Hastings, West Monroe and Caughdenoy with 2 ambulances and a mix of paid & volunteer EMTs, EMT-Ps and EMT-CCs handling about 1,800 calls annually. The process of dissolving SOVAC and it being absorbed by Menter Ambulance would be a lengthy process, if that is in fact the direction both organizations choose to go, with several layers of New York state regulation to go through.

MASSACHUSETTS
MedStar Ambulance, a commercial ALS level ambulance service with 8 bases in Massachusetts is reported by the Associated Press on 1/13/17 to have settled a fraudulent billing suit by agreeing to pay Medicare $12.7 million. The complaint filed in U.S. District Court says an ex-employee worked as a MedStar Ambulance patient account representative in Worcester, MA in 2012 and 2013 and reported finding “numerous instances of fraudulent Medicare billing” while looking through records. The complaint says the bogus billing included billing unnecessary ambulance transportation services and double-billing patients and Medicare for the same services. The employee said she was fired after she tried to correct billing errors. She will receive $3.5 million of the settlement.