Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

FIRE CHIEF'S GENERAL ORDER

NUMBER: 11-07

May 20, 2011

TO: All MCFRS Personnel

FROM: Fire Chief Richard Bowers

SUBJECT: EKG Acquisition and Transmission

The components necessary to transmit EKGs from the field to hospital emergency rooms have been put in place. Effective on May 23, 2011 at 0700, all ALS providers ***must*** comply with the requirements below.

12 lead EKGs ***must*** be acquired on all patients over the age of 35 who present with:

- chest discomfort, non-traumatic;
- dyspnea, not ***obviously*** explained by pulmonary causes (asthma, croup, etc.);
- syncope;
- these *unexplained* symptoms:
  - profuse diaphoresis,
  - arm, shoulder, neck, or jaw pain,
  - profound nausea/vomiting, or
  - dizziness/vertigo;

and on:

- any patient, regardless of age, in whom the ALS provider suspects a possible cardiac component; or
- any patient who has chest pain/discomfort due to suspected illicit drug usage (cocaine, stimulants, etc.)

12 lead EKGs ***must*** be transmitted to the receiving hospital when they display these criteria:

- STEMI interpretation by machine;
- STEMI interpretation by ALS provider, regardless of machine interpretation;
- new or presumed new LBBB; or
- any abnormal EKG that the provider believes needs further assessment.

12 lead interpretations must ***never*** be used as a tool to downgrade a patient to BLS.

If circumstances prevent the provider from complying with this Order, those situations must be documented in the narrative of the patient care report. The provider may be asked to explain the justification to the EMS Section.

Information cards with acquisition and transmission criteria, as well as directions on how to transmit, will be placed on all cardiac monitors.

Holy Cross, Shady Grove, Suburban, and Washington Adventist hospitals have donated all the hardware, software, and data plan expenses needed for these transmissions, to Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.

Questions may be addressed to Assistant Chief Diane Zuspan at 240-777-2453.