

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MD**

INFORMATION BULLETIN

NUMBER: 07-10

May 17, 2007

SUBJECT: Enhanced Water Rescue Capability

To improve the MCFRS response capability to water rescue incidents throughout the County, our existing water rescue capabilities are being enhanced with the introduction of Boat 25 and Boat 31. Effective immediately, these boats are available for dispatch. Use of these boats should adhere to the guidelines below.

- Boats 25 and 31 will be routinely dispatched for water-related events in still or “moving” water.

DEFINITION: Still or moving water will move a floating object, but does not present swift water features, such as hydraulics, holes, or standing waves. Ripples or small waves may be evident on the water’s surface; however, the risk to swimmers is slight, and self-rescue is considered effective.

DEFINITION: Swift water moves faster than one knot (1.15 miles per hour), and presents surface features such as hydraulics, holes, or standing waves.

- Boats 25 and 31 may be dispatched on swift water events. However, personnel and boats may enter the water only if proper size-up determines the water type to be still or moving water, as defined above.
- If swift water conditions exist, personnel and boats must not enter the water. Personnel must await the arrival of qualified swift water rescue personnel (e.g., a Swift Water Rescue Group). Crews awaiting the arrival of a Swift Water Rescue contingent may verbally instruct victims in self-rescue, or reach toward victims with appropriate equipment or ropes.
- Personnel must be equipped with the proper P.P.E. and rescue equipment to conduct any shore-based rescue, including a safety team equipped with radios down stream.

To ensure these boat resources are available for dispatch, the station officer must designate a qualified boat crew at the beginning of each shift. A qualified boat crew consists of a certified boat operator and at least one water operations level crew member. The inability to staff Boat 25 or Boat 31 must be reported to the respective Battalion Chief.

Issued by: Assistant Chief Michael McCarty, Special Operations Section