

MCFRS COMMUNITY RISK ANALYSIS AND STANDARDS OF COVER

C. Community Expectations and Performance Goals

The citizens and elected officials of Montgomery County, Maryland have the expectation that Montgomery County Fire Rescue Service (MCFRS) will take actions to prevent, be prepared, respond to and mitigate fire, hazardous, environmental or medical emergencies to a reasonable sense of normalcy. It is also expected that measurable standards and expectations be adopted and assessed to evaluate the effectiveness of MCFRS's efforts and to identify areas in need of improvement. MCFRS then should take action in response to the identified deficiencies to improve the delivery of emergency services.

Community Expectations:

Prevent the Emergency

Expectation:

Develop and implement comprehensive emergency medical, fire and disaster prevention/education programs.

Response:

The Division of Community Risk Reduction Services which includes a variety of public education and outreach programs, as well as the offices of the Fire Marshal.^{xxxix}

Public Education

The "Safety in Our Neighborhood Program" keeps our communities safe and healthy by providing comprehensive and effective fire and injury and disaster prevention/educational outreach programs through diverse partnerships and utilizing a variety of outreach tools and mediums.

Code Enforcement

The Fire Code Compliance section provides inspections of commercial, industrial and residential structures for compliance with applicable County and State fire and life safety codes. Engineering staff provide technical evaluation of complex fire protection needs and recommend systems or processes for appropriate fire protection in all occupancy types within the County. Yearly

MCFRS

COMMUNITY RISK ANALYSIS AND STANDARDS OF COVER

inspections are conducted at health care, day care and educational facilities, as well as residential boarding and home-based health care facilities.^{xl}

Car Seat Program

The Montgomery County Car Seat Program started over 11 years ago. Our mission is to ensure that children ride properly restrained in car seats and seat belts while traveling. Motor vehicle crashes are a leading killer of children under 15 and we want to prevent the 911 call. We also emphasize safety in and around cars with the caregivers (trunk entrapment, never leaving children alone in vehicles, rollover prevention, etc.) The program inspects around 8,000 car seats each year at seat checks, and attends numerous community outreach events each year to educate the public. We distribute over 500 reduced priced car seats annually to families in need and conduct multiple trainings each year to nationally certify and update our technicians. The program also provides loaner car seats for children with special healthcare needs. All participants at seat checks are also given fire safety information. Approximately 11,000 calls are taken each year to answer questions caregivers have, and a website is kept up to date with current resources for parents.

CERT

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates residents in disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their communities and trains them in basic disaster response skills, such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization and disaster medical operations. Using training learned in the classroom and during hands-on exercises, CERT members can give critical assistance to others in their neighborhoods or workplace following an event when professional responders are not immediately available to help. CERT members also are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking a more active role in safety education and emergency preparedness projects in the community.^{xli}

Prepare for the Emergency

Expectation:

MCFRS is to be prepared to respond to all types of emergencies with well trained, able-bodied personnel who are properly equipped with the tools, apparatus and technology necessary to perform their duties in a safe, timely and efficient manner.

MCFRS

COMMUNITY RISK ANALYSIS AND STANDARDS OF COVER

Response:

The Division of Wellness, Safety and Training which oversees the Safety Section, Training Section and Occupational Medical Section and the Division of Administrative Services Department which oversees Logistics, Information Technology, Procurement, Human Resources, Capital Improvement and Facilities and Budget and Grant Administration.^{xliii}

Technology

The Information Technology section is responsible for development, implementation and ongoing support of all IT needs for the department. This section ensures compliance with all Department of Technology Services requirements, assists with Computer Aided Dispatch, directs the Data Warehouse and maintains desktops, and Firehouse reporting and inventory control software.^{xliiii}

Training

Training courses are provided in six areas; volunteer orientation classes, entry level firefighting, emergency medical technician training, paramedic training, career development courses that train personnel to operate at increasing levels of responsibility, command officer professional development and improvement (COPDI). Additionally, regular in-service training is conducted for field personnel to evaluate company readiness as well as in-station, field and on-line drills and training. The high school fire science program, offered in conjunction with the Montgomery County Public Schools, is an alternative educational opportunity that allows high school students the opportunity to explore the fire and rescue service^{xliv}. (Note – this program was suspended in FY 11 due to budget issues.)

Fire Rescue Occupational Medical Section (FROMS)

Provide fire-specific focus on MCFRS health needs. Services provided by FROMS include entry level physicals, annual physicals, injury care, return to work exams, fitness for duty exams, vaccinations, and follow up evaluations as necessary. FROMS also monitors employees injured on the job to ensure appropriate care and timely return to work.^{xlv}

Logistics

The Logistics section handles the uniform and protective clothing requirements for career personnel in the fire/rescue occupational series. This includes the procurement, order placement, receipt, storage, inventory and distribution of a wide array of items as well as related contract and budget

MCFRS COMMUNITY RISK ANALYSIS AND STANDARDS OF COVER

administration and invoice processing. The Logistics section coordinates special services such as uniform tailoring and alterations, shoe repair and protective clothing inspection, cleaning and repair^{xlvi}.

Respond and Mitigate

Expectation:

When the need for emergency services arises, the citizens of Montgomery County expect to have easy access to the fire and rescue services: that the service will respond safely and in a timely manner with adequate personnel and resources to protect lives, property, and the environment with effective emergency management and mitigation provided by skilled, motivated, and compassionate career and volunteer service providers representing Montgomery County's diverse population.

Response:

The Division of Operations is the organizational component of the MCFRS that is responsible for the day-to-day delivery of critical EMS, Fire Suppression, and Technical Rescue mitigation to the citizens and visitors of Montgomery County. The career and volunteer components of the combined service work in an "Integrated Emergency Command Structure" that defines the authority and responsibility for all members of the service. The Operations Division is organized into five major sections, including Field Operations, Emergency Communications Center, Special Operations, Emergency Medical Services and Fleet Management^{xlvii}.

Alarm Receipt and Dispatch

The Emergency Communications Center is responsible for the effective performance of all emergency communications relating to a fire, rescue, or emergency medical incidents. From its Communications Center work site, the Communications Section is the primary link between a citizen, who reports an emergency, and the fire and rescue personnel and equipment, who respond to an incident scene. The Communications Section dispatches all emergency fire and rescue resources in Montgomery County. It also participates in data processing activities for the fire and rescue services and serves as the focal point for other regional governments during mutual emergency operations^{xlviii}.

MCFRS

COMMUNITY RISK ANALYSIS AND STANDARDS OF COVER

Apparatus

MCFRS personnel operate thirty-four engines, fourteen aerial units, six heavy rescue squads, nine tankers, eighteen ALS transport units during the day with seventeen staffed at night and twenty-two BLS transport units during the day with seventeen staffed at night (based upon available volunteer staffing) to make up the primary fleet of first response apparatus. There are additional units that can be placed in service with available volunteer or recalled career personnel to increase the MCFRS capability. All apparatus is procured and maintained by either the MCFRS Apparatus Section or by the individual local LFRDs^{xlix}.

Stations

Thirty-two fire/rescue stations and two rescue squads, most of which are strategically located throughout the county base on population density and specific hazard location.

Thirty-one of the stations associated with local volunteer fire/rescue corporations. The other three are entirely owned, operated and staffed by Montgomery County Government.

Personnel

Over 1200 career firefighters and approximately 1100 volunteers provide emergency fire/rescue services to the citizens of Montgomery County. All Active firefighter/rescuers and emergency medical personnel must meet applicable standards of training and experience to serve in the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Services, and to participate in the Integrated Emergency Command System¹.

EMS

The MCFRS EMS function provides BLS and ALS services to the residents, businesses, and visitors of Montgomery County. While any MCFRS primary unit can provide first responder-level service, a higher level of care and transport service is provided by a fleet of ambulances providing BLS care and medic units providing ALS/paramedic care. ALS First Responder Apparatus - "AFRA" (i.e., engine, aerial unit or rescue squad with a firefighter-paramedic on-board), if available, is dispatched on ALS incidents if closer than a medic unit, along with the closest ambulance and/or closest medic unit. One or more ambulances are present in all but five of the MCFRS stations, and medic units are present in 14 stations. Rescue Station 1(BCCRS) and Rescue Station 2 (WVRS) each has a fleet of EMS and rescue units consisting of medic units, ambulances that can be upgraded to medic units

MCFRS

COMMUNITY RISK ANALYSIS AND STANDARDS OF COVER

when the proper equipment and personnel (at least one paramedic) are aboard, and heavy rescue squads.^{li}

Fire Suppression

The MCFRS fire suppression function provides fire protection services to the property owners in Montgomery County and to the operators and passengers of vehicles, trains, and aircraft using the County's transportation networks and airspace. Fire suppression units respond to structure fires, vehicle fires, rubbish fires, utility pole fires, and fires involving natural resources such as brush, grasslands, croplands, and forests. Thirty-two of thirty-four existing MCFRS stations operate water-equipped fire suppression units. Only the two existing rescue stations (BCCRS and WRS) lack water-equipped suppression units, although both have heavy rescue squads considered to be both suppression and rescue units.^{lii}

Special Operations

Montgomery County Fire and Rescue staffs two fully equipped hazmat units in two separate strategic locations for effective hazardous materials response throughout our county. Our hazmat team is capable of responding to any incident where there is the potential release of a hazardous material both natural and manmade. The minimum staffing requirement is thirteen members in consolidated stations with other certified technicians located at stations throughout the county. Our capabilities include command, analysis, identification, mitigation, decontamination of a release of hazardous materials and coordination with other agencies such as DEP, MDE and other state and federal entities for a safe and effective resolution.

The Montgomery County River Rescue and Tactical Services team, provides swift water rescue and technical rope rescue with the primary focus to the Potomac river. The team also serves the entire county during flooding events. This is accomplished with personnel from Fire Station 10 and 30. Personnel are trained to water rescue specialist and swift water boat operator status. Staffing is provided for 2 boats with crews at both stations on a 24/7 basis. Each station is equipped with a support vehicle with rope and water rescue equipment, 2 inflatable boats on trailers, a utility pickup truck and one air boat. Training days are scheduled on each shift once a month and yearly skills recertification for team members is required.

MCFRS COMMUNITY RISK ANALYSIS AND STANDARDS OF COVER

Montgomery County MDTF-1 is a team of individuals specializing in [urban search and rescue](#), disaster recovery, and emergency [triage](#) and medicine. The teams are deployed to emergency and disaster sites within six hours of notification. The [Federal Emergency Management Agency](#) (FEMA) created the Task Force concept to provide support for large scale [disasters](#) in the United States. FEMA provides financial, technical and training support for the Task Forces as well as creating and verifying the standards of Task Force personnel and equipment.

Restore Normalcy

Expectation:

After an emergency incident, the community expects that MCFRS will take action to eliminate the potential for spread of the hazard to person, property or the environment. The community desires to feel secure and confident that their most basic physical, psychological and emotional needs are met and their lives can be restored to state similar to that of the pre-emergency.

Response:

MCFRS provides investigative, security and support services to meet the needs of the community post-mitigation of an emergency incident.

Secure Situation

On fire events, necessary and appropriate salvage and overhaul operations are performed to prevent further loss of property. The scene is secured of any hazards to the general public and turned over to the property owner or appropriate authorities. For EMS incidents, after the patient(s) have been removed from the scene, all medical waste and potential biohazards are removed and secured in appropriate containers for proper disposal.

Provide Assistance

Regardless of the type of incident, often the need for physical, mental and emotion assistance is required by the occupant, patient and/or family of those involved. MCFRS provides support and assistance in conjunction with agencies such as the Red Cross, MCFRS Critical Incident Stress Management Team, Montgomery County Crisis Center and local clergy.

MCFRS

COMMUNITY RISK ANALYSIS AND STANDARDS OF COVER

Investigate

The Fire and Explosives Investigation section investigates all fires involving loss of life, serious injury, substantial property damage and all suspicious fire, to determine the cause, origin and circumstances. The Section is responsible for the enforcement of all State and County laws concerning fire, arson and explosives. This program involves four major elements: (1) fire and explosive origin and cause investigation; (2) investigation of incendiary or explosive devices or materials; (3) hazardous device mitigation (bomb squad); and (4) training and education to business, law enforcement agencies and the general public regarding fire and explosive materials.^{liii}

After the Fire

After every significant fire event, MCFRS field operations section performs an “After the Fire” activity. In service fire/rescue units canvass the neighborhood/area of the event and pass out general information about the event and fire safety, as well as answering any questions the public may have regarding the event.

MCFRS

COMMUNITY RISK ANALYSIS AND STANDARDS OF COVER

Vision and Mission Statements

Vision Statement

The Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service vision is to keep our communities safe and healthy by providing the best fire, rescue, and emergency medical services, utilizing career and volunteer resources.

Mission Statement

The Mission of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service is to protect lives, property, and the environment with comprehensive risk reduction programs; and safe, efficient, and effective emergency response provided by skilled, motivated, and compassionate career and volunteer service providers representing Montgomery County's diverse population.

Guiding Principals

"Our Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service providers will:

- Deliver services to our customers with impartiality and excellence
- Promote the highest standards of safety and welfare
- Serve with integrity and mutual respect
- Recognize the importance of diversity of our workforce and communities
- Promote the efficient and effective utilization of our resources, and ensure that all organizations and personnel comprising the MCFRS share the responsibility for continuously improving their capabilities, effectiveness, and efficiency
- Be responsible for the honor of our profession and public service
- Promote equity and harmony among career and volunteer personnel
- Maintain and promote open honest communication, creativity, and competence
- Be accountable and ethical
- Continuously improve public confidence and trust