

45th Parallel EMS Annual Report

During 2010, the 45th Parallel Emergency Medical Services (45th) had a busy and productive year, responding to emergency calls and requests for interfacility transfer, providing EMS coverage for community events, and offering educational opportunities for EMS professionals and the community. The 45th provided an ambulance to standby at the Governor's appearance at Pittsburg High School graduation and the Law Enforcement Torch Run. A fast responder was engaged to stand by at the Vintage Snowmobile races, the Mud Run, Lumberjack Competition, and the Dixville Races. 45th EMT-Intermediates participated in N1H1 flu clinics held throughout the area administering flu vaccinations as part of the efforts of the state of NH to prevent a flu pandemic.

The service area of the 45th includes the towns of Pittsburg, Clarksville, Stewartstown, Colebrook, Columbia, and Dixville NH, and Norton, Canaan, and Lemington VT. The agency employs a staff of 29, which includes an Acting Chief, 5 full time EMT-Intermediates, along with 22 per diem employees with 4 First Responders, 12 EMT-Basics and 6 EMT-Intermediates, and a part time bookkeeper. During 2010, the 45th responded to five hundred and seventy-one 911 emergency calls and two hundred and forty-eight Interfacility transfers.

The 45th is overseen by a Board of Directors made up of representatives of the towns in our services area, the Colebrook, Beecher Falls, and Pittsburg fire departments, UCVH representation and two at large members. During 2010 new appointments to the Board was Dan Shallow representing the town of Pittsburg and Hasen Burns representing the town of Stewartstown. Resignations during 2010 included Brian Dorman-Town of Pittsburg, Clay Hinds-at large, Charlie Chalk-at large, and Harry Brown-Town of Stewartstown.

Training is always a focus of the 45th. An EMT-Basic Course was conducted during 2010, with eight students successfully completing the course. Monthly trainings for all area responders are held the last Monday of the month. A year-long schedule of American Red Cross Courses (ARC) was presented with 18 classes held, training 208 people in ARC Instructors Training, CPR/AED Adult & Child, CPR/AED for the Professional Rescuer, Adult CPR/AED, CPR Infant and Child, Adult CPR, Babysitter Training, Dog First Aid and Standard First Aid. Many of the ARC courses were presented at work sites, making our schools, day care centers, and places of employment safer for all. All of our course and equipment expenses for two years are covered by a \$40,000 grant received by the ARC. Sixteen new adult CPR manikins and 8 new junior CPR manikins were recently purchased through the grant.

The 45th Parallel EMS responds with the fire departments to structure fires. We recognized that the availability of people trained to respond to local disasters with resources to help the victims with immediate needs, such as

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food and shelter, was limited in this area. The 45th Parallel worked with the ARC to provide community training to become an ARC Disaster Volunteer. The training was conducted at the 45th station in November, with twelve people completing the Volunteer Orientation. The next step in the training, Case Work, will be held at the 45th station in January 2011, resulting in a new group of ARC volunteers available to respond to local disasters.

The Fast Responder Model continues to be integral to our operations. We work closely with the Beecher Falls and Pittsburg Rescue squads for medical calls, snowmobile and motor vehicle accidents and other rescues, and the Colebrook Fire Department for motor vehicle and snowmobile accidents, and other rescue operations. Due to the large geographic area that is covered, working in cooperation with the Fast Response squads is vital to the welfare of our patients. By reaching the patient quickly, and stabilizing and providing care while awaiting the arrival of the ambulance to transport them to the hospital, the Fast Response squads improve the outcome for the patient. In addition to the Fast Response squads, there are 18 fast responder packs containing basic and advanced life support equipment and AEDs distributed to EMS responders in Bloomfield, Brunswick, Pittsburg, Colebrook, Canaan, Beecher Falls, and Stewartstown. The packs have been used at 172 calls, 8 calls in Bloomfield, 12 calls in Canaan, 8 calls in Clarksville, 67 calls in Colebrook, 15 calls in Columbia, 5 calls in Dixville, 1 call in Errol, 4 calls in Norton, 22 calls in Pittsburg, and 30 calls in Stewartstown.

We moved into our new station on Ramsey Road the last weekend of January 2010. Having a home with all of our ambulances and equipment under one roof has made a world of difference in our working conditions. The station provides us with office space, living quarters, a training room (Community Room), and a four bay garage. The Community Room has been used to hold our EMT-B, ARC classes, and monthly trainings. The room has also been utilized by other nonprofit groups including: NH Fish & Game, Clarksville Pond Association, UCVH, North Country Suicide Prevention Coalition, Regional Snowmobile Planning Group for meetings and trainings. The station is being maintained through a planned program of daily housekeeping and maintenance.

The 45th provided fast response emergency medical services for the second year for the Untamed New England Adventure Race, a 72-hour extreme adventure race with a course that was spread out over several hundred miles in New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine, with racers paddling, trekking, and biking over remote terrain. This year, the race headquarters was located at the 45th station. The racers' progress was tracked by satellite and computer and there was a dispatcher at the station throughout the entire 72 hours of the race, along with two responders in the field, staying ahead and behind of the racers.

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Though there were no medical emergencies this year, we did respond to several “Help” activations and were dispatched to find racers who were in need of some assistance. The organizer of the race was very pleased with our service and has made the decision to keep his next event in 2012 in this area to maintain his collaboration with the 45th and NH Parks Service. The plan is to increase the duration of the event to four days, possibly apply for world championship status and increase community involvement by promoting the event as a tourist destination event bringing revenue into the area. The 45th realized a greater than \$2,000 profit from the event.

In October, representatives of the 45th traveled to the Center for the Arts in Concord to receive the NH Bureau of EMS 2010 Pamela Mitchell/Richard Connolly Memorial Achievement Award. This award recognizes an individual or group who has made an outstanding contribution to the Emergency Medical Services System of New Hampshire. The criteria to be nominated for the award is that the contributions of the individual or group nominated should have significantly enhanced the EMS system in New Hampshire, assisted in promoting EMS statewide, and/or created positive public awareness about the Emergency Medical Services Profession.

The 45th is in the final phases of applying for an EMP grant from Homeland Security that will support the purchase of a generator for the station, Touch Book computers for the ambulances, mobile radio for the Chief vehicle, and repeater radios for the ambulances. This grant is being applied for cooperatively with the Town of Colebrook.

In 2011, the 45th will be one of thirteen services in the state participating in a year-long study of the vacuum spine board that is being conducted by the NH Trauma Board. This immobilization device molds to the patient and is much more comfortable, reducing pain and preventing skin breakdown. With our long transport times, both from the scene of the injury to UCVH and from UCVH to a trauma center, the benefits of this backboard should be significant to our patients.

The 45th, along with all emergency response agencies in the area, will have increased radio interoperability with the installation of new repeater towers on Signal, Magalloway and Whitcomb mountains and Ben Young Hill. This half million-dollar grant was a cooperative effort between several towns, local agencies, and the state of NH.

The Board of Directors and the Chief of the 45th continue to practice prudent financial management of the agency’s resources. We have worked diligently to minimize the burden to the taxpayers of the towns we service and who support us. This has resulted in level funding again this year. The total amount of the

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town subsidy will not increase in 2011, though the portion that each town pays changes each year as that portion is calculated on a formula based on each town's number of runs, population, and number of housing units. Providing healthcare in today's economy is an ongoing challenge as the area has suffered extensive job losses, people have become uninsured, and government insurances have not kept pace with the actual cost of providing these vital services.

The past twelve months have been very productive for the 45th as we continue to grow and refine our operations. We continue our commitment to providing the absolute best care to the residents and visitors of the great North Woods. EMS is a challenging profession when you are the one responding to a person's worst day. There is great sadness when we respond to a fatal snowmobile accident or to a major disaster such as the explosion on Gould Street. However, there is also great satisfaction when we can care for and help a person as we safely transport them to the continued care they need, be it at UCVH, Dartmouth Hospital, Concord Hospital, or Sherbrooke Hospital. The 45th Parallel is always available for those who need our services.

Thank you to the 45th staff and Board of Directors for your hard work and dedication and to the towns we service for your continued support. We look forward to 2011 with great anticipation.

Respectfully submitted,
Michelle Hyde, Acting Chief