



# On Duty

## Golf tourney benefits Texas EMS Hall of Honor

The Texas Association of Air Medical Services is again sponsoring a golf tournament on Friday, November 9, in Austin, in conjunction with Texas EMS Conference. Proceeds will go to a fund that helps families of those killed in the line of duty travel to the Texas EMS Conference for the Hall of Honor ceremony during Tuesday's luncheon. The tournament format is a four-man scramble with a shotgun start at 1 p.m. at the beautiful Onion Creek Country Club on the southern edge of Austin. An awards dinner follows the tournament. Registration fees are \$125 per player or \$400 per foursome and include driving range, golf and dinner. Register online at [www.taams.org](http://www.taams.org).

## DSHS receives 111 local projects grant applications

The Office of EMS/Trauma Systems Coordination (OEMS/TS) has received 111 Local Project Grant (LPG) applications for fiscal year 2013 funding consideration. The OEMS/TS staff and Public Health Region staff have begun reviewing and scoring all proposals, and our goal is to announce awards in early August. Each year, OEMS/TS awards about \$1 million in funding for EMS projects through a competitive application process. Check our homepage, News/Features column, for LPG updates. For more information on available funding, go to [www.dshs.state.tx.us/emtraumasystems](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emtraumasystems) and click on Funding Sources.

## Emergency funding available

Has your area suffered a devastating event that might qualify you for Extraordinary Emergency Funding? The Extraordinary Emergency Fund is available to assist licensed EMS providers, hospitals and registered first responder organizations if unforeseeable events cause a degradation of service to the community. Situations that may severely reduce or incapacitate emergency response capability are considered extraordinary emergencies. **Archer City Ambulance Service** was recently approved for \$97,963.73 to replace their primary response unit and a stretcher destroyed in a motor vehicle crash. For information on these grants, contact Haramain Shaikh at [haramain.shaikh@dshs.state.tx.us](mailto:haramain.shaikh@dshs.state.tx.us) or call 512-834-67000, ext. 2706.



## CoAEMSP implements new site visit payment procedure

The Committee on Accreditation of Education Programs for EMS Professions will implement a new payment schedule for programs paying for the cost of a site visit. The goal is to simplify budgeting for programs. Programs with site visits occurring or scheduled after July 1, 2012, will pay an upfront, flat fee of \$2700 for a regular site visit, even if actual costs for the site visit go as high as \$3200. A regular site visit is defined as two visitors for two days.

CoAEMSP says on the rare occasion when the actual cost of a regular site visit exceeds \$3200, the program would pay only the actual amount over \$3200; CoAEMSP will absorb the cost between \$2700 and \$3200. Occasionally, CoAEMSP will determine there are special circumstances that require additional resources beyond a standard site visit. If CoAEMSP determines that the site visit requires more than two visitors, the program will be invoiced \$1350/additional visitor. If CoAEMSP determines that the site visit requires more than two days, the program will be invoiced \$250 per visitor per additional day.

For programs with site visits already scheduled, CoAEMSP will work directly with them to convert to this new payment system. Following this transition period, programs will pay the flat fee at the time of submission of the Initial Accreditation Self Study Report (ISSR) or the Continuing Accreditation Self Study Report (CSSR). Programs submitting the Letter of Review Self Study Report (LSSR) do not pay a site visit fee at that time. This site visit fee will be paid when the program submits its ISSR. Programs can consult the CoAEMSP web site for more information: [www.coaemsp.org](http://www.coaemsp.org).

## EMS near-miss and line of duty death online reporting tools launched



A new national online tool for anonymous reporting of near-miss and line of duty deaths has been launched. National Association of EMTs, along with the Center for Leadership, Innovation and Research (CLIR) in EMS, developed a system for EMS practitioners to report near-miss and line of duty death incidents by answering a series of questions online. The purpose of the system is to collect data to analyze and use in the development of EMS policies and procedures. No individual responses will be shared or transmitted to other parties. The tools launched last month and are live at [www.emseventreport.org](http://www.emseventreport.org). These tools, along with an already existing tool to report patient safety events, form the EMS Voluntary Event Notification Tool (EVENT). For more information on EVENT, go to <http://event.clirems.org>. All responses to this national site are voluntary. Texas has no mandatory reporting requirements for near misses or for LODDs, although DSHS staff welcomes the information.

## Medicare fraud nets EMS providers

Four EMS providers in Houston have been charged for trying to defraud Medicare out of more than \$16 million in phony claims. The EMS providers are accused of transporting ambulatory patients to mental health clinics but billing Medicare for hospital transports. The indictments were part of the largest health care fraud crackdown in U.S. history, with an estimated \$450 million in fraudulent Medicare claims. Documents obtained by the Houston Chronicle showed transports billed as “hospital” trips were not. Medicare rules require patients to be “bed-confined,” and transported to a hospital, dialysis clinic or nursing home, not a community mental health center. The four ambulance providers transported patients to Spectrum Care, a mental health facility. Spectrum Care’s two owners were charged in a \$90 million Medicare billing scheme along with an assisted living home owner accused of taking kickbacks for sending her residents to the clinic. In addition to raids in Houston, federal agents raided businesses in Miami, Los Angeles, Detroit, Chicago, Tampa, Fla., and Baton Rouge, La. The government also suspended payments to 52 providers as part of the investigations.

## Virtual EMS museum plans for more

Did you know there’s a national EMS museum? The online collection of articles and photographs covers the history of prehospital medicine with information dating back to the 1700s, well before the birth of modern emergency medicine. The virtual museum, which was developed in the last few years, has a mission of “memorializing and commemorating the history of EMS and the individuals and organizations that provide emergency care to the sick and injured.” Future plans for the museum include developing traveling exhibits and eventually a building for permanent storage of artifacts, tools and vehicles. While NAEMT provided some start-up funding, the non-profit organization is actively seeking donations to carry out its vision of a brick-and-mortar national EMS museum. To learn more or to donate (or just browse the old photos and information), go to [www.emsmuseum.org](http://www.emsmuseum.org).

## Vehicle visibility study initiated

The U.S. Fire Administration (USFA), along with several other groups, has initiated a study of emergency vehicle markings, lighting and design to maximize visibility to approaching motorists. The goal is to develop best practices for using various chevron patterns and reflective decal markings, and new arrangements of warning lights. The study will focus on emergency vehicles not covered by existing standards in this area. Further information on USFA’s emergency vehicle and roadway safety research initiatives may be found at [www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/research/safety/vehicle-roadway.shtm](http://www.usfa.fema.gov/fireservice/research/safety/vehicle-roadway.shtm).



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## NHTSA unveils campaign to prevent child heatstroke

Sadly enough, Texas leads the nation in the number of children who die from heatstroke after being left in cars during the summer months. The U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has launched its first-ever national campaign to prevent child heatstroke deaths in cars, urging parents and caregivers to think "Where's baby? Look before you lock." NHTSA will launch a series of radio and online advertisements centered around the theme "Where's baby? Look before you lock," as well as a toolkit for parents and grassroots organizations to use in local outreach on the issue. Go to [www.safercar.gov/parents/heatstroke.htm](http://www.safercar.gov/parents/heatstroke.htm) for more info.

## CDC announces launch of new apps for field triage

A new CDC smartphone application that helps EMS professionals learn about the 2011 Guidelines for Field Triage of Injured Patients is now available. EMS professionals can use this app, which is free from Apple, to test their knowledge and learn more about transport decisions for injured patients. To learn more about the 2011 Guidelines for the Field Triage of Injured Patients, visit [www.cdc.gov/Fieldtriage](http://www.cdc.gov/Fieldtriage).

## 2012 award nominations due September 28!

Don't forget to nominate an outstanding person or organization for the Texas EMS/Trauma Awards. Simply go to the our website ([www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems)) and click on Texas EMS Conference. We're making the process easier than ever this year – all you have to do is click on the link and it will take you directly to a page where you fill out the nomination form. No need to save and email to us. Once you've finished, a page will come up that allows you to print the nomination for your records. No need to submit after that – once you close the page, it will be routed to us. Best of all, you will get an email letting you know we received it. Winners are announced at the Awards Luncheon at Texas EMS Conference.

### Award Categories 2012

- EMS Educator Award
- EMS Medical Director Award
- EMS Administrator Award
- Public Information/Injury Prevention Award
- Citizen Award
- Private/Public Provider Award
- Volunteer Provider Award
- First Responder Award
- Air Medical Service Award
- Outstanding EMS Person of the Year
- Telecommunicator of the Year
- Trauma Center Award
- Regional Advisory Council Award

## Join the crowds: Sign up for email updates

Are you on the list to receive email updates from DSHS when new information is posted to our website? Join the thousands of EMS and trauma stakeholders who now receive email updates based on the topics they choose. There are 12 topics to choose from, ranging from EMS educators to GETAC. Every time we upload new information to the website (such as GETAC agendas), you'll be notified. And don't worry – we decide when we send out an email, so we won't send you an email every time we correct a typo. Go to [www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems](http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/emstraumasystems) and click on the "Sign up for email updates" icon.

