

Rapid Lesson Sharing

Event Type: Integration of National Guard Medics

Date: August 28, 2015

Location: Carpenter Road Fire, Washington



National Guard Medics are trained for the battlefield. They bring knowledge, experience, and equipment that fits well into the wildland fire environment.



NARRATIVE

The Pacific Northwest 2015 fire season took on unexpected resources. The states of Washington and Oregon activated their National Guards to support the dwindling and overextended resources.

The National Guard's primary mission is to support their home state. Most service members have strong ties to their local community. They work normal jobs and spring into action when called to serve their state and country.

On the Carpenter Road Fire in Northeast Washington, Army National Guard Medics helped fill a critical need for trained EMTs and

Paramedics. National Guard Medics are trained for the battlefield. They bring knowledge, experience, and equipment that fits well into the wildland fire environment.

Guard Medic Team Assists Anaphylactic Shock Bee Sting Incident

The Carpenter Road Fire used Army National Guard Medics in two ways.

First, they helped staff the medical tent in ICP. Second, three teams of two Medics were staged in Humvees at key locations near the fire. Their primary purpose was to rapidly transport injured firefighters to advanced medical care.

This was tested in a case of anaphylactic shock after a bee sting. The injured firefighter was transported from his work location to the drop point where a Guard Medic Team was staged. They assumed patient care, helped coordinate with an air ambulance, and then handed off the patient to an air ambulance.

"Integrate the National Guard Medics into your plan after a job shadow session. This will give them an opportunity to better understand the operation prior to their first shift by themselves."

RLS Team Member

LESSONS – REMINDERS

- ✓ Army National Guard Medics have a broader scope of practice than NREMT. They can give IVs and push fluids. They can also push drugs like epinephrine (auto-injector and ampoule) and perform Cricothyrotomy ("Crike") to establish an airway. These skills are relevant to bee stings and dehydration—which are occurring frequently this season.

- ✓ Normally, Army National Guard Medics are only permitted to work on other military personnel. So, if National Guard Medics come to your fire, clarify their rules of engagement:
 - Have they been cleared to work on non-military personnel? Under their protocols, they may need approval by the State Surgeon General to work on non-military personnel.
 - What scope of practice are they working under? Army Medical, or the more restrictive NREMT?
- ✓ Army National Guard Medics do not actively use their skills for pediatric, gynecological, diabetic, or geriatric emergencies.
- ✓ National Guard Equipment is very similar, so there is interoperability with medical equipment. For example, skeds, aid bags, AED's, O2 bottles, are all similar.
- ✓ Many medical supplies are interchangeable, though the names are slightly different.
- ✓ Consider requesting their medical kits if you cannot get yours in a timely manner. Military Medical Equipment Sets (MES) are comparable to 100- and 500-person medical kits from the fire cache.
- ✓ Because they are familiar with medivac operations, the National Guard Medics were able to rapidly set up a medivac site for a civilian medical helicopter. Their training brought the helicopter in to the spot needed to safely evacuate the patient for higher level care.
- ✓ Military Humvees are ideally suited for a fire incident's all-terrain environment.

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Pacific Northwest Wildfire
Coordinating Group

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