



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date: July 3, 2013

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Results of Modified Emergency Response Model Test Are Promising Additional Evaluation Being Initiated

For the last several months, the Portage Department of Public Safety – Fire Division has been conducting a Modified Emergency Response Model test to determine what improvements in service to the Portage community could be achieved by using Quick Response Vehicles (QRVs) for medical calls for service. QRVs are SUVs or similar vehicles that have been equipped to respond to medical calls for service or rescue type calls. Medical / rescue calls account for approximately 65% of all calls for service handled by the Fire Division.

For the purposes of this test and in order to collect a statistically significant data sample, a QRV was located at both Fire Station #1 and Fire Station #2 for use on medical response runs in these two areas. Fire Station #3 was “browned out” during the hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., but remained fully staffed between the overnight hours of 5 p.m. and 8 a.m. Data collected prior to the initiation of this test indicated that this could be accomplished with minimal impact to service provision in this area. Station #3 is located on the east side of the city.

Preliminary data from the Modified Emergency Response Model test indicates that response times for medical calls showed a significant reduction, not only in the two test areas but also in the majority of the Station #3 area. At this time, the results of the study indicate that the use of QRVs for medical response calls is a more efficient and cost-effective manner to provide these services. The use of engines and other large apparatus can be greatly reduced by the use of QRVs and may extend the life of these costly resources.

In order to continue to evaluate the effectiveness of utilizing QRVs, an additional study period is being initiated, whereby the additional staffing resources associated with the "brown out" of Station #3 have been discontinued. As a result, the "brown out" of Station #3 has been discontinued, effective July 1, 2013. Over the next six months, data will continue to be collected regarding the use of the QRVs from Station #1 and Station #2 under a 24-hours-per-day / 7-days-per-week scenario. At the conclusion of the study period, sufficient information should be available to support a determination concerning the ongoing and expanded use of QRVs.

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