



ASK YOUR FIRE DEPARTMENT...

Battalion Chief Frank Giuliano

QUESTION *Posted: 05/28/2008 From Marlene Stabach*

Why does a fire engine and an ambulance show up on the same scene? Isn't that a duplication of services? Do we really need both of these to arrive if it's for medical reasons?

ANSWER

That's a great question Marlene, and it's one we hear frequently. Lee County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is a completely different entity from the fire departments in Lee County. In Bonita Springs, there are five fire stations placed in different areas of Bonita to assure that we can cover our entire district. Housed in three of those five stations are one ambulance unit and two EMS personnel, usually a trained paramedic and emergency medical technician (EMT). This meaning, if there was a medical call in Station 1's zone, off of Old 41, the ambulance would have to respond from our closest station, which could be Station 2 off of Mango Drive and Bonita Beach. Therefore, the fire engine or rescue vehicle would arrive before the ambulance and would begin life support as to not waste valuable minutes to save the patients life. Once the ambulance arrives, all medical services are taken over by the paramedics and EMT's from Lee County EMS and if necessary, the patient is transported to a hospital. The men and women on your fire engines can perform the same services with the same medications and same equipment as your ambulance, but only the ambulance can transport the patient. In addition, many times an incident, such as a cardiac arrest, will require more than just two paramedics or EMT's to assist the patient. In that case, additional help is required to affectively mitigate the situation. Lifting help, moving about stairs, and assisting the patient onto the stretcher are also reasons that more people might be needed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Frank Giuliano". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.