



To the Citizens of Susquehanna Township and families of our
Emergency Providers:

In these unprecedented and trying times, we want to underscore our commitment to best practices regarding safety in emergency preparedness and response. We know that the safety of your loved ones is your greatest concern. We understand, and it is our greatest concern as well. We also owe all of those on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic the best protection we possibly can offer. Keeping them protected enables us to continue providing effective and timely response to everyone in need.

We want to make you aware of important steps we are taking in Susquehanna Township to protect our first responders, so that they can safely serve our citizens and return safely to their families.

First, we remind you that Susquehanna Township emergency personnel *always* use personal protective equipment (PPE) – gloves, for example -- and follow protocols designed to protect them and our patients from infection and illness; this is true even in normal times.

The threat posed by the novel coronavirus COVID-19 demands additional measures. Here are some of the most important ones:

- Susquehanna Township EMS (STEMS) conducts a mandatory “Healthy Check-In Program” to make sure personnel come to work healthy. We take temperatures every time we start a shift, and ask basic screening questions about cough, fever and respiratory symptoms. If STEMS personnel display any of those symptoms, they are sent home. The Healthy Check-In applies to our staff and emergency provider personnel and is effective until further notice. Shift Captains are responsible for documenting completion of these checks.

- We have restricted visitors to our Municipal building, Police Department, EMS and Fire Stations in order to reduce exposure to the virus.
- We have enhanced our normal practices for cleaning stations and apparatus. All personnel must disinfect the following surfaces multiple times a day: Desks, eating and food prep areas, phones, doorknobs, push and pull door handles, sinks, bathroom mirrors, patient compartment areas and other heavily trafficked or used surfaces.
- All providers must wear the appropriate PPE based on information provided from 911 operators about the call and on observations at the scene, in accordance with Centers for Disease Control standards. Dauphin County dispatchers are using new national protocols for screening calls for cough, respiratory symptoms and fever so we have a better idea of potential COVID-19 risk.
- After a call, PPE must be removed in accordance with CDC recommendations.
- Cleaning of uniforms, apparatus and restocking of PPE are done in accordance of County, State and CDC recommendations.
- Our response profile has changed as well. While we continue to respond to all emergencies, we have lessened the number of responders that personally interact with the public. This is to protect our members as well as the public.

The Susquehanna Township Public Safety Department is made up of Professionals from the Police Department, Susquehanna Township EMS, the Susquehanna Township Emergency Management Agency and our volunteer professionals from the Progress and Rescue Fire Companies. We thank you so much for your support. We hear every day from residents who express their appreciation for the work our responders are doing. We all agree that the present times are trying on a variety of personal and professional levels. As this virus develops through our region, we will develop strategies and tactics as the CDC and science dictates. We hope that these enhanced procedures address any concerns as we work together to get through these difficult days. We thank you for your assistance in keeping our community safe. Godspeed.

Respectfully,

Robert A. Martin, Director of Public Safety

George C. Drees, Fire Marshal/Chief

Brad W. Reist, Emergency Management Director

Matt K. Baily, Chief Susquehanna Township EMS