

**TOWNS FORM SHARED SERVICE AGREEMENT FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**

*Eastampton, NJ* – The Board of Fire Commissioners for the Eastampton Fire District and its Eastampton Fire-Rescue Department (EFD) are pleased to announce that we have entered into a shared services agreement with Westampton Township and its Westampton Township Emergency Services (WTES) organization. The agreement calls for WTES to provide emergency medical services (EMS) to Eastampton. This service was previously provided by the Eastampton Emergency Squad, a member organization of the EFD.

Effective July 1, 2010, WTES will become the primary provider of basic life support ambulance service for the residents of Eastampton Township, under the direction of the EFD. The EFD will continue to provide all of its other fire and rescue services.

“With an increasing state-wide emphasis on shared services between neighboring towns as a way to increase efficiency, improve service levels, and reduce costs to taxpayers, the Board of Fire Commissioners believes that this agreement with Westampton Township is a win-win situation for both towns,” stated Board Chairman Philip Polios. “Eastampton residents will receive consistent medical services from a professional organization with full-time staffing. Westampton will optimize its investment in career staff by providing emergency services to both towns.”

The Eastampton Emergency Squad joined the EFD on January 1, 2006 with the intent to coordinate emergency squad and fire department operations within one organization to improve operations. According to Mr. Polios, “it has become apparent that due to the increased call volume and the lack of sufficient volunteers required to provide continuous coverage, the reliance on the Eastampton Emergency Squad as the primary emergency medical services organization was not viable operationally or economically. Westampton Township Emergency Services is prepared and staffed to provide round-the-clock emergency medical services to residents of both towns at a level of service they expect and deserve.”

Emergency officials from both Eastampton and Westampton Townships have stated that the consolidation of EMS services represented by this shared services agreement will result in comprehensive oversight and uniform coverage for both townships. EFD Chief Gene Oberfrank is working with WTES Chief Wylie Johnson III to oversee the transition. For the past several months, WTES has been the primary EMS provider for Eastampton on weekends as part of a trial program. Current volunteers from the Eastampton Emergency Squad will be able to serve as volunteer EMTs with the WTES under the new agreement.

The Eastampton Fire-Rescue Department will continue to deliver its fire and rescue services from Station 349 on Woodlane Road in Eastampton, with support services operating from Station 341 on Smithville Road. Westampton Township Emergency Services will continue to provide its fire, rescue, and emergency services from Station 272 on Woodlane Road in Westampton. Both organizations provide automatic aid to each other for fire and rescue services under the Burlington County Mutual Aid Plan.

The Eastampton Board of Fire Commissioners would like to acknowledge the efforts of Shelly Augustino, Assistant Chief for EMS for the EFD, and all current and former members of the emergency squad for their dedication and service to the township, the fire district, and the residents of Eastampton. Assistant Chief Augustino will continue to supervise the emergency medical service delivery in Eastampton and will serve as liaison to the WTES for the Board.

###