OKALOOSA COUNTY
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Title: Temperature Extremes
Policy: 424.00
Purpose: To ensure that Okaloosa County EMS has procedures in effect dealing with
fluid and medication temperature extremes.

Policy:

I. TEMPERATURES ABOVE 89º F
   A. If ambulance units are parked outside for any length of time the air conditioning in the patient
      compartment should be used to maintain a temperature below the maximum temperature recommended
      by manufacturers. In general, this temperature is 77 – 89º F depending on the medication. If the unit is
      outside and the inside temperature where the medications are stored is above the recommended
      temperature, notify the Logistics Department for information concerning the medications.

II. TEMPERATURE BELOW 59º F
   A. If ambulance units are parked outside for any length of time the heater in the patient care compartment
      should be used to maintain a temperature above the minimum temperature recommended by
      manufacturers. In general, this temperature is 56 – 59º F depending on the medication. If the unit is
      outside and the inside temperature where the medications are stored is below the recommended
      temperature, notify the Logistics Department for information concerning the medications.
   B. In the wintertime when temperatures fall below the 59º F, ambulances should be parked inside a garage
      if available.

III. MEDICATIONS EXPOSED TO TEMPERATURE EXTREMES
   A. If medications or other supplies are exposed to temperatures outside the recommended ranges for an
      extreme duration, the Logistics Department will pull the supply and contact the vendor or manufacturer
      for their recommendation.
   B. If there is any question about the supply it will be pulled from the stock and replaced.

IV. AMBULANCE UNITS LEFT OUTSIDE
   A. If an ambulance unit must be left outside for an extreme duration and not in service (i.e. maintenance)
      then all of the medications and fluids are to be removed from the ambulance unit.

Accountability and Compliance:

1. It is the responsibility of all crewmembers to ensure that the ambulance units and the medications
   stored in them are maintained and monitored for temperature extremes.
2. The Logistics and Finance Captain will maintain continuous dialogue with medication manufacturers
   for medication management recommendations.
3. The average temperature and the number of times temperature rises or falls outside of the established
   temperature range 56-89º F will be documented monthly for each ambulance. Fluids and
   medications that fall out of temperature range more than 5 times in a monitoring period or for longer
   than 2 hours per period will be disposed of according to policy.

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