



EMS Information Bulletin - #064

DATE: January 22, 2009

SUBJECT: Operation of Ambulance and Other Emergency Vehicles
While at Hospital Emergency Department

TO: Pennsylvania Ambulance and EMS Services

FROM: PA Department of Health
Bureau of Emergency Medical Services
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Concerns have been noted by hospitals located within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania that Ambulance and EMS Services have been leaving their vehicles unattended, with the engine running, while parked at the facilities. This practice allows exhaust fumes from the vehicle to enter the facility. Many Hospitals and Medical facilities have policies in place that require Ambulance and EMS crews to shut off their engine while dropping off or picking up patients in order to prevent fumes from entering the building.

In addition, the practice of allowing the vehicle's engine to run while unattended is dangerous because this will allow for easy theft of the vehicle and its contents. There have been numerous Homeland Security Advisory bulletins issued on the theft of emergency vehicles and their equipment when parked at hospitals and other health care facilities.

The Department would ask that each Emergency Service issue a policy that would require vehicle operators to turn off their engines while the vehicle is at the Emergency Department to pick up or drop off patients. This will address the security issues, prevent the fumes from entering the building and will lower service operating costs by not wasting fuel.

Please cooperate with the hospital staff and security to address this issue as soon as possible.

Thank you!