



# ***New York State Department of Health Bureau of Emergency Medical Services***

## ***IMPORTANT ADVISORY AND UPDATE***

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### **Subject: Orange Alert in Response to War with Iraq March 24, 2003**

The current Orange Alert issued by the State Emergency Management Office has required a core group of state agencies to mobilize at the State Emergency Management Office (SEMO) State Operations Center. This mobilization is precautionary only and there is no direct intelligence indicating the possibility of an attack within New York State. The state EMS Bureau (BEMS) is staffing its desk as part of the Department of Health at the state emergency operations center. In the event of an incident located within your county, the county emergency manager will determine, along with other county officials if state assistance is needed.

As with any high alert (e.g. hurricane warning) local emergency services should make standard preparations that will allow the service to respond should availability of supplies be interrupted or agencies are asked to respond to another jurisdiction to assist with response. BEMS is recommending that EMS services do the following during the current alert.

### **DO NOT respond to any incident outside of your jurisdiction unless directed to do so by your county/local emergency response system.**

#### **Vehicles, Equipment and Supplies**

- Assess the existing inventory of emergency medical supplies. This should include back up capacity for replacement of oxygen.
- Re-confirm that all vehicles and equipment is in good functioning order.

#### **Personnel**

- Contact each active member of the service to determine any upcoming vacation plans that will require staffing backup.
- Confirm that each member of the service has two pieces of identification, one of which must be a government issued photo ID (i.e. NYS Drivers License). If the region has regional ID, assure that it is current and that each member carry it on their person.
- Confirm that each active member of the service has a valid NYS EMS certification at the level for which they are practicing.

- Insure that all staff are familiar with, and have copies of the recently distributed DOH Chemical and Radiological Response Cards. They should also be familiar with BEMS Policy # 03-02 regarding Biological Infectious Diseases, Policy #01-08 Suspected Anthrax response and 01-02 EMS Use of the Incident Command System
- **Planning**
- Review the service's mutual aid plans and re-confirm how to contact ambulance or EMS services that will provide coverage in the event the service or community requires it.
- Review the service's role in the county or municipal response plan for mass casualty response. Review the service's protocol/procedures to follow if the plan is activated.
- During any state activation, either to an incident or for precautionary reasons, your county may receive "state or federal issued alerts" to share with each EMS agency. Please be aware of what the local system for alerts is, and have an agency protocol in place describing how to share these alerts with all staff/members.

***These alerts are for emergency service personnel and should not be considered public information.*** For questions, please contact the DOH regional EMS office or the Operations Unit in the BEMS Central Office.