



# International Association of EMTs and Paramedics

A DIVISION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

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CONTACT: Philip Petit  
617-376-7237

## **NEW HAVEN EMTs, PARAMEDICS TO RALLY AGAINST SAFETY ISSUES WITH AMERICAN MEDICAL RESPONSE**

(NEW HAVEN, CT)—EMTs and paramedics working for American Medical Response in New Haven, Connecticut, are so concerned about a growing list of safety issues on the job that they'll ask for the public's support at a **rally on Tuesday, April 19, at 3:30 pm on the New Haven Green.**

"Absentee management at AMR New Haven has allowed several situations impacting worker and patient safety to escalate," said Philip Petit, national director of the International Association of EMTs and Paramedics, which represents the AMR employees. "We've tried to use the normal channels to address these problems, but management isn't working with us. We hope the people of greater New Haven will join us in putting pressure on AMR to do the right thing by patients and workers alike."

Among the problems the IAEP has tried to address:

- Local managers have been renamed "regional directors" and spend more time in the Virginia area than in Connecticut. The result: Basic operational matters, from reordering critical supplies for ambulances to important management decisions, get postponed indefinitely. EMTs and paramedics have been fearful their rigs would not be stocked with basic supplies. One stark example: EMTs and paramedics reported at a recent meeting with union representatives that they had requested junior epi-pens for their ambulances, only to be told by management to use adult epi-pens instead.
- AMR has changed its scheduling policy, now staffing more of its ambulances with two EMTs instead of teaming an EMT with a paramedic on the same ambulance. Because these crews are not equipped to respond to all kinds of emergency calls, the emergency system gets overtaxed and paramedics get held over unexpectedly at the end of their shifts to make up for the lack of response. Routine hold-overs are not simply inefficient; they exhaust paramedics, which isn't safe for them or their patients.
- The stations themselves contain hazards for the people who save lives in emergencies. The Milford station is infested with mold and has been for years, yet even after notification, AMR has done nothing to correct the situation. Workers in other stations complain of fumes from leaking motor oil in non-ventilated areas, but again, AMR has taken no appropriate action.

"If we want to depend on EMTs and paramedics to save lives in emergencies, the least we can do is make sure they have safe working conditions to help them do their jobs," said Petit. "They're such an important part of the community and I hope the people of New Haven will stand by them"

AMR New Haven provides 9-1-1 service for the city of New Haven and several surrounding towns, as well as providing scheduled medical transportation out of Yale New Haven Hospital and the West Haven Veterans Hospital. EMTs and paramedics there respond to some 85,000 caller per year, according to a Facebook post by AMR New Haven earlier this month.

AMR's parent company, Envision, is worth approximately \$3.7 billion. The company bought out its largest competitor, Rural/Metro, in late 2015 for an estimated \$620 million.

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