

Tuesday, August 30th 2016

Legislative Council Study Committee

Good afternoon, my name is Dan Clark; I'm the ambulance director for the Washburn Area Ambulance Service in Washburn Wisconsin, located in Bayfield County. This, is about 6.5 hours north of here and about 312 miles. It is also about 3 hours north of Eau Claire and Wausau those two areas are often mistakenly referred to as northern Wisconsin by many.

My "real" job is I'm the Chief Deputy of the Bayfield County Sheriff's Office. I have been with the office for 32 years.

I would like to start by thanking you for the invitation to speak and applaud the efforts and foresightedness to convene this study committee in the first place.

My EMS career started in 1978 when I took a First Responder class in Washburn Wisconsin. This is also where I went on my first ambulance call, which ironic enough I did not live in Washburn at the time, I lived in Drummond 40 miles south. It would not be for another 8 years before I moved to Washburn.

I took a CPR instructor class in 1979, and then started the EMT class in 1980 in Cable WI. And worked with the Great Divide Ambulance service as a volunteer until I moved to Washburn in 1985 and joined the Washburn Area Ambulance.

The Washburn Area Ambulance Service provides BLS (Basic Life Support) coverage to the City of Washburn, Town of Washburn, Town of Bayview and Town of Barksdale. Around 300 square miles and a census population of 4277. Not included are the many miles of Lake Superior which we have responded to medical emergency on. It should also be noted that 51% of the homes in Bayfield County are considered "Second Homes", which means in our area the true population is much greater than 4277.

Our service has 25 people on the roster, not all are actually active. We respond to about 400 calls a year. On a side note, the greatest increase in calls in the past 3 years is lift assist. This brings a whole new set of problems. (Obese patients, lack of family support, lack of payment etc.)

I have been asked to speak to some of the training requirements and difficulties with training in general. We are in the Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College area. It would be silly for me to kick them too much, as they gave me the initial training in EMS & Law Enforcement, which set me on my career path, which means 1000's of hours of continuing education, these past 38 years.

But I can't sit here and say it has not changed. Some to the good, and some not so much. I'll start with the not so much. The class hours continue to rise and rise, some say to meet national standards, but if Wisconsin leads the other states in EMT skills just who are we trying to meet? The EMT training used to be offered free of charge to volunteer/municipal services. Again and it's ironic that I remember, in I think 1987, testifying, in maybe this very room, the need for stable funding for Wisconsin Ambulance Services, it was called "One for Life" way back then and it did get some traction, and in the end FAP dollars funded much needed equipment and training that continues today. It also has seen changes, that seem to benefit, maybe those less in need than some way up north, but that that is a different issue. The ironic part is that right after these funds were made available the vocational system on a state level found they needed to start charging for EMT classes. When the EMT training first came to the state in the 60's, the vocational schools really wanted to offer this free training, now that the services had some new money, they just happen to see the need to change, ironic again don't you think.

That was a game changer. Many of us use the pulse method for recruitment. Meaning if you have an interest and a pulse, we love you.

Over the past 15 years our service manages to get or keep an average of 1 EMT out of every 4 EMT students we sponsor. Or in other words if the average cost is just over \$1200.00 then the true cost is about \$4800 for every new EMT. Some have said "Well Dan, you need to do a better job pre-screening" really, well

remember the pulse method. I have been given a number of reasons why people do not finish the class or do not become active once they complete. Some of the top reasons given are: I'm not cut out for this, My family objects to all the time I'm giving this, and lastly, my job and this conflict too many times.

We, like many other services do not have a lot of people lining up to do this. I was told last year by an EMT instructor that is a college level class, it has gotten much more difficult. Really, really, or can you charge more for a college level class and add more hours to do so?

We in the great Northwoods take it for granted that everything involves time and distance. Our most recent EMT class is being conducted over the ITV (interactive television) system. This prevented the cancelling of class because of low enrolment (this is great). However, every other Saturday the students from the Ashland Campus (and I guess the others) had to travel to Rice Lake to practical hands on classroom training (this not so great).

This is about 110 road miles, 1.5 hours of windshield time (each way). What does that look like, well I'm glad you asked or may have thought of asking. I'm not sure how many in this room would travel 220 miles and three hours' windshield time for an 8-hour class and do that 3 or 4 times, to become a volunteer. If there was a career job at the end of that tunnel, maybe. But this is not about career jobs is it.

Class cost

Immunizations (GM after 1969, TB w/in 5yr Tetanus w/in 10yrs) Check with county Public Health Dept. /personal physician / clinic	\$ varies	\$0
HCP-CPR Manual (approximate)	\$16.25	\$16.25
Tuition (authorization from EMS agency or direct payment) Must be paid/authorized upon registration	\$766.00	\$766.00
EMT Student Textbook/Workbook (approximate)	Approx. \$150-\$200	\$175
Platinum EMSTesting – (supplied by WITC)		\$0
Exam Gloves (1 box approximately 100 gloves) (obtain from any source, must have top/side shields. Check with your EMS agency)	\$varies	\$0
Protective eyewear (obtain from any source, must have top/side shields. Check with your EMS agency)	\$varies	\$0
EMT NREMT Application Fee/Pearson Vue Computer Adaptive Test (not paid until the end of the course, required each time the computer exam is taken)	\$70.00	\$70.00
Practical Skills fee to WITC (not paid until the end of the course, station retest per station)	\$115.00	\$115.00
Caregiver Background Checks and other criminal history checks (may be required depending on agency requirements)	\$75.00	\$75.00 \$1217.25

Emergency Medical Technician Program

WITC Program Preview

When you're looking at the 180-hour EMT program developed by the Department of Transportation, it is important to understand the expectations and requirements.

Take time to schedule an appointment to meet with the EMS Teaching Specialist and/or instructors who will be able to answer your questions and help you make an informed decision about your future career as an EMT.

Admission Requirements

Students in this program must:

- Be at least 17 years' old
- Complete application process
- Successfully complete reading entrance assessment (waiver may apply with acceptable alternative test scores and/or postsecondary degree completion)
- Review and sign [Caregiver Background Check and/or Criminal History Record Check Statement of Understanding Form](#)
- Review and sign the [Functional Ability Statement of Understanding](#)

Program-Specific Requirements

Students in this program must:

- Have acceptable results based on the Wisconsin Criminal History Record Check, Wisconsin Caregiver Background Check, Minnesota Caregiver Background Check (if applicable), and/or other states if applicable

- Provide current immunization history and demonstrate negative status for tuberculosis (Tb)
- Submit a copy of the appropriate Wisconsin (or other state(s)) DOT Driving Abstract if you have any violations/suspension/revocation
- Submit signed EMT Syllabi Form, Confidentiality Statement of Understanding Form, Background Information Disclosure (BID) Statement, and a Student ID Form
- Attend a mandatory orientation session scheduled prior to start of class

Review our [professional links page](#) to review career opportunities and discover more about this versatile and exciting field.

Contact an [Admissions Advisor](#) or [Greg Carlson](#), Dean of Public Safety or [Ken Gilliam](#), Associate Dean EMS & Fire Training, to schedule an appointment

Once you become a Wisconsin EMT there (as of today) is no requirement for continuing education other than taking a 30-hour refresher every other year and keep your CPR card current.

The refresher training continues to be offered in a number of formats. Which is good, because many of the volunteers don't have a work schedule that works around their volunteer schedule. But at times it has been frustrating, and many time members of our service end up using vacation time, and time away from their family to get their refresher in. As the map above showed we do not have a lot of resources to choose from to get these mandated classes in. Even though our service does give \$2.00 an hour to be on call and \$35.00 for going on a call (average 2.5 hours) (and this time continues to increase with computerized run reports, and is expected to get worse.) They do not receive any money to go to trainings not offered in-house. In house trainings they received \$10.00 for meeting attendance.

Our members report an average of 3-5 days a year of vacation days taken for EMS training.

All but two of our members maintain their National Registry of EMT's certifications. Along with the state requirements of a refresher and CPR stated above, they also require 48 hours (every two years) of continuing education. Our service supports much of this training by offering in-house training, or sponsoring a member to one of the EMS conferences offered in the state or at times Minnesota. There is still a personal cost to this, time away from their

family, work and again the need to use some of their vacation time as mentioned above.

The cost of being a Volunteer EMT is far greater than money, and much different than a career. This is done on top of the typical 40 hours a week, this is done days and nights, weekend, holidays, during family celebrations etc. Many give and give and give.

But that really does not look well on a recruitment banner.

“Give up your free time, family time, subject yourself to possible injury and illnesses. Take the chance that, that one call could cause PTSD. And yes ladies and gentlemen you too can do this for little or no pay, and what you do get, does not cover all that it truly costs you.”

As to training, the votech system cannot look at EMT training as FTE's, or as a stepping classes for Paramedic. Unfortunately, I think that has happened more than anyone truly realizes.

At the end of this, I have attached a snap shot of the Washburn Area Ambulance Service members and their contribution to the community and its visitors.

A few closing points. Every service has its own personality. Not every solution will work with everyone. The cost of training in time, money and distance needs to be looked at from all corners of the state. By plotting these committee's members in the next graphic, I think you will see that I don't think that was done. By not having a majority of the committee members truly volunteers, I think that also was not accomplished.

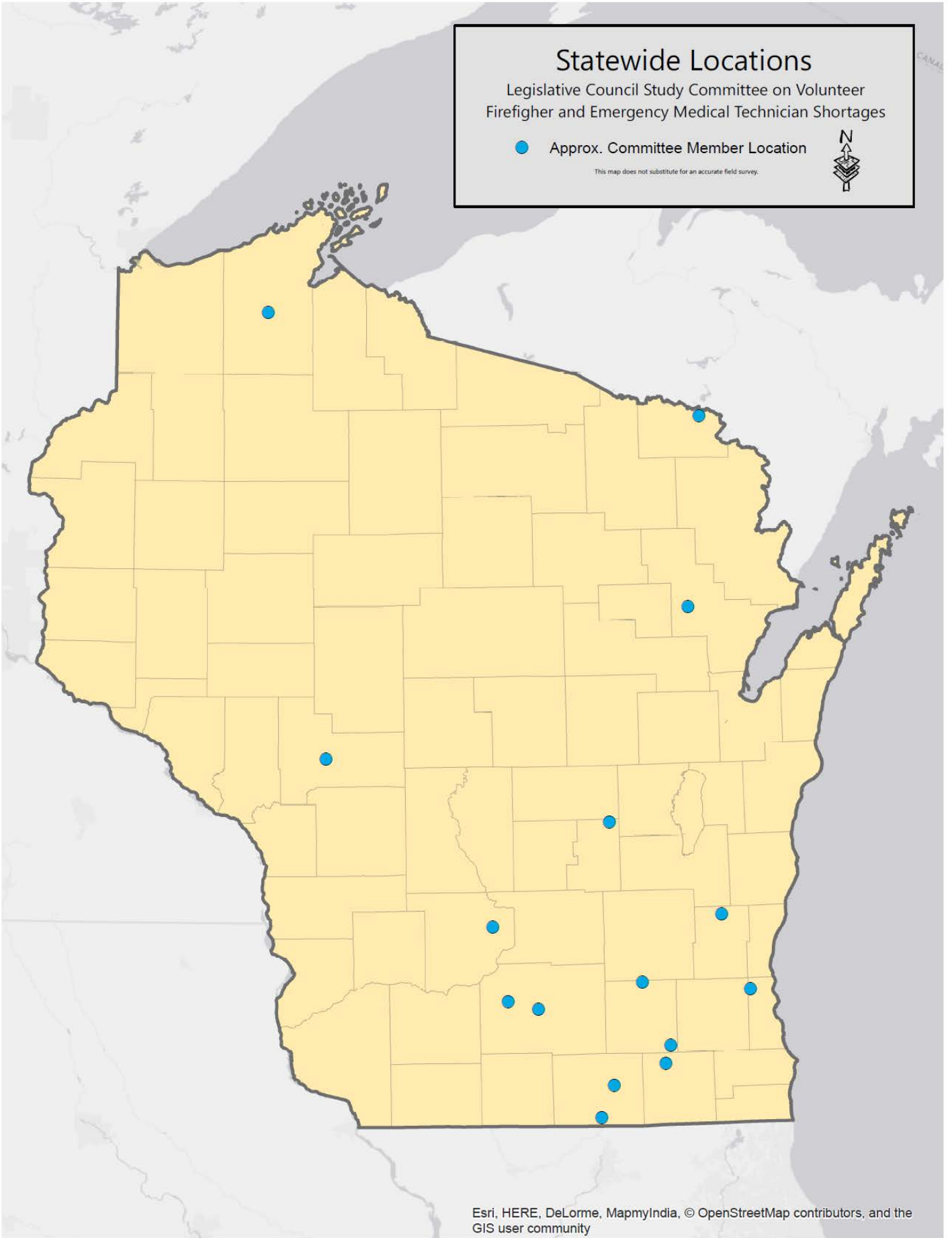
Statewide Locations

Legislative Council Study Committee on Volunteer
Firefighter and Emergency Medical Technician Shortages

● Approx. Committee Member Location



This map does not substitute for an accurate field survey.



Today I'm here using vacation time, next week my wife Karyl and I will celebrate our 30th wedding anniversary. Karyl accompanied me here so we can call this "family time". She also is a volunteer with the Washburn service, in fact the longest member of 34 years. We have gotten use to this type of double dipping, many unfortunately do not.

I want to thank you for your time today, I could not sit here and tell you everything is perfect, keep up the great work, it's not. If I offended anyone I apologize, I have looked at this problem for many years and if I had the answer to a quick fix, I'd be rich selling that idea everywhere. Again, Thank You.

**Washburn Area Volunteer
Ambulance -EMT information as of 7/01/2016**

These numbers are averages only and possibly contain mistakes; the city's payroll department should be used for actual hours and runs.

	Name	License #	Years (in their)	Total Amb Calls	Total hours on call	Hours into years (2080)	YTD Calls	YTD Shifts	Average calls per year	Average Shifts per year
01	Jeff Bellile	57220	19	431	12512	6.01	7	46	22.68	109.75
02	Naomi Bratley	7006919	13	315	6296	3.02	1	0	24.23	80.7
03	Carl Broberg	7021229	8	1008	19738	9.48	107	282.58	126	411.20
04	Sherry Carlson	37156	26	536	17896	8.6	14	50	20.06	114.71
05	Dan Clark	25613	31	1840	39809.5	19.13	57	140.72	59.35	214
06	Karyl Clark	29214	34	573	6198	2.97	3	0	16.85	30.38
07	Evelynn Dax	7022465	9	574	10406.5	5	15	59.98	63.77	192.71
08	Gwen Goodrich	70100619	5	126	2564	1.23	7	32	25.2	85.46
09	Ted Gostomski	7014117	0	19	332	.015	19	55.3	19	55.3
10	Scott Griffiths	70106361	2	135	1117.5	.537	40	52.2	67.5	93.1
11	Nicole Guske	70104262	3	49	973.5	.468	12	50	1633	54.0
12	Kay Hawbaker	70106757	2	48	712.5	.34	15	42.55	24	59.37
13	Joseph LeBouton	7030373	5	583	11690	5.62	44	163.4	116.6	389.66
14	Ross Lind	7016613	11	451	9416.5	4.52	5	17.8	41	142.67
15	Sharon Mager	32259	30	1081	29397.3	14.13	3	4	36.16	163.31
16	Leaf Mahoney	70103887	2	43	645.2	.31	1	0	21.5	53.7
17	Jim Marsh	57756	19	665	19906.5	9.57	3	23.8	35	174.61
18	Rachel Obiden	7030687	0	1	39	0	1	6.5	1	6.5
19	Andrew Okey	38511	25	1112	16022	7.70	34	38.3	44.8	106.81
20	Carrie Okey	7006925	12	282	7843	3.77	17	86.55	23.5	108.93
21	Dave Renz	7030127	2	182	2604	1.25	30	48.8	91	130.23
22	Eugene Rich	7014174	12	1046	22993.5	11.05	32	116.66	87.1	319.35
23	Lisa Verville	70104057	3	387	1806	.86	69	113.4	129	150.5
24	Elisa (Eli) Wilson	70108354	0	2	20	0	2	3.3	2	3.3
25	Diana Young	7021242	2	47	869	.41	16	39.58	23.5	72.41
								1473.42		
	Averages		11	462.71	9672.06	4.639	22.16	58.9		132.9

