

## ***NEWS RELEASE***



**From The Office Of Fire Chief Chip Prather  
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In an aggressive effort to improve the safety of its community members and firefighting forces from the hazards encountered during emergency vehicle response the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) has implemented a new Tiered Medical Dispatch system. This new system will reduce the number of unwarranted Code 3 (lights and siren) emergency responses.

Under this new medical dispatch system, OCFA's advanced and basic life support units will be dispatched Code 3 (lights flashing and sirens sounding) only for life threatening situations. The call type and severity will determine the type of unit(s) and mode of response necessary. These changes will not affect how the OCFA responds to fires and other non-medical type emergencies.

Fire dispatchers will determine the severity of the incident while they are on the phone with the 9-1-1 caller. Dispatchers are trained to obtain the necessary information from 9-1-1 callers to make the appropriate decision as to the type of call, resources required and their level of response. Once units have been dispatched, dispatchers remain on the line with callers providing life-saving instructions. Based on updates received, dispatchers or responding units have the discretion to modify response code levels (upgrading or down-grading resources) at any time.

"The OCFA is proud to roll out this new Tiered Medical Dispatch system that will not only provide the appropriate resource response, but will also make our streets safer by sending units Code 3 only when absolutely necessary," said OCFA Board Chair Tracy Worley Hagen. "This change received unanimous support from our Board, and our staff did an outstanding job of implementing the system in a short period of time."

The OCFA evaluated tiered medical dispatch systems from all over the country before making the decision to develop their own Tiered Medical Dispatch system.

*The Orange County Fire Authority is a joint powers authority that serves as the all-risk emergency response agency for 1.3 million Orange County residents in 22 cities and the unincorporated areas of the county.*