



NEWCASTLE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

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For Immediate Release

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Upgraded Emergency Medical Training Saves Newcastle Man's Life

On the morning of Sunday, May 10th, the Newcastle Fire Protection District responded to a report of an allergic reaction from a bee sting to an adult male. Upon arrival, the patient was quickly identified to be in anaphylactic shock, a severe allergic reaction. The firefighters from Newcastle Fire Engine 41 quickly collected information about their patient, learning that he had a history of allergies to bee stings, a compromised airway, and low blood pressure. The patient had a severely swollen tongue that was rapidly closing off his airway, making it difficult to breathe and impossible to speak. The crew identified this patient as a candidate for intramuscular (IM) Epinephrine, a lifesaving drug that can counteract the effects of anaphylaxis and severe asthma. Once the medication was administered the patient's status improved dramatically, his tongue reduced in swelling and his breathing and blood pressure stabilized.

Patient care was then transferred to an AMR Ambulance paramedic who acted quickly to continue treatment and transport the patient to a nearby emergency room. During transport the patient required aggressive treatment by the paramedic, assuring that the reaction wouldn't further threaten the patient's life. After the patient was safely in the care of emergency room doctors, the paramedic reported back to the engine crew that the early administration of the IM Epinephrine played an important role in saving the man's life.

IM Epinephrine is a medication that can be given by Basic Life Support (BLS) personnel under Sierra-Sacramento Valley Emergency Medical Services Agency (S-SV EMS) protocols as "advanced scope". That means that in order to carry and use this medication the Newcastle Fire District had to increase their training to meet the standard that the overseeing medical agency sets forth.

Newcastle Fire Protection District was one of the first Fire Departments in Placer County to upgrade their levels of EMS services to their community as a BLS Optional Skills Provider. These additional lifesaving skills include the administration of the medication's epinephrine and naloxone and the ability to insert a King Airway Device to secure an otherwise compromised patients airway. This call is a great example of how the increased scope of training can ultimately lead to the saving of a person's life. Fortunately, this upgraded training and the initial purchase of the required medications and equipment was supplied by a grant that Newcastle Fire applied for and received in October of 2017 from S-SV EMS, through the Placer County EMS Fund, provided by AMR. The Newcastle Fire District's budget is very limited and would not have been able to support this program without the initial grant funding. Simply replacing the costly epinephrine is challenging with our minimal available funding.