

Fairfield County EMS

Stryker Power-PRO™ and Stair-PRO® Pay Their Own Way

A Difficult Balance

As director of the Fairfield County, South Carolina EMS Department, Mike Tanner routinely balances the need to save lives with the demand to conserve expenses and meet budgets.

One of Tanner's key priorities to his 50 employees is that they have the advanced equipment necessary to handle an increasing number of patient calls each month. In addition, his responsibility to the nearly 25,000 county residents, whose taxes support Tanner's department, is to ensure that the equipment he purchases is cost-effective. By investing in advanced equipment, Tanner found a solution that satisfied the needs of both parties. The result: his department met the county's transport needs, reported no injury-related lost or modified work days in 2006, increased efficiency due to fewer injuries and is no longer experiencing greater than \$40,000 in workers' compensation expenditures per year.

His secret? The purchase of ten Stryker Power-PRO powered ambulance cots and nine Stryker Stair-PRO stair chairs in December 2005. The investment Tanner made in this new equipment reduced employee and patient injuries. The projected savings in workers' compensation expenditures alone will more than offset the purchase of the equipment in approximately two years.

A Lot of Ground to Cover

Keeping the 31 men and 19 women of the Fairfield County EMS injury-free is important, too, because they have a lot of ground to cover. The team has ten trucks available to cover a territory of 710 square miles. Fairfield EMS reported a monthly average of 350 calls in 2005 and 368 in 2006. Responding to 4,416 calls annually across such a wide area doesn't allow the service to miss a beat or a day. That's where the Stryker products come in.

The Stryker Power-PRO and Stair-PRO deliver significant reductions in workers' compensation, while greatly reducing lost day injuries among rescue personnel.

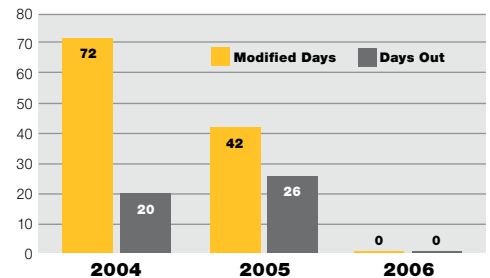
In 2004, Fairfield EMS had three staff injuries resulting in 20 "lost" days or days in which these employees were out due to a work injury. They also reported 72 "modified" days, where employees recovering from injury could only work in non-rescue positions. Combined, that equated to just over 3 months out of the year in which Fairfield County EMS was not fully staffed. For 2005, two employee injuries resulted

in 26 lost days and 42 modified duty days. After investing in the Stryker equipment, the numbers for both categories fell to zero in 2006, the first full year in which the Stryker equipment was used.

"Before, we were forced to call in for extra help when responding to calls that required heavy lifting," says Tanner, referring to removing injured persons from multilevel facilities. "So we couldn't afford to have staff shortages or have them use equipment that wasn't suitable for the situation. That's where the Stryker Power-PRO ambulance cots and Stair-PRO stair chairs have helped tremendously."

EMS Equipment

Lost and Modified Workdays for Fairfield County EMS



About Fairfield County EMS

Full-time male employees	31
Full-time female employees	19
Number of calls per year in 2006	4416
Number of trucks	10
Number of Stryker Power-PRO	10
Number of Stryker Stair-PRO	9

Stryker Power-PRO Key Features

- Raise and lower patients using your finger, not your back
- BackSmart® ergonomic design minimizes the risk of injury
- High-speed retract to add efficiency
- Battery powered with manual back-up
- Retractable head section for increased maneuverability

Stryker Stair-PRO Key Features

- Eliminates lifting when moving patients down stairs
- BackSmart design promotes proper body mechanics
- Folds to compact size

EMS Equipment

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A Level of Safety that Brings Results

Fairfield County EMS acquired ten Power-PRO cots with expectations that the battery powered hydraulic lift would provide user advantages. They found that use of the Power-PRO greatly reduces back strain when raising or lowering patients on every transport. Even though the empty cot is slightly heavier than a manual version, the reduced strain when lifting heavy patients has significantly lowered Fairfield's overall risk of injury and resulted in reduced operating costs.

Fairfield also acquired nine Stryker Stair-PRO stair chairs for use in situations that require the transport of disabled or injured people from places such as multilevel apartment buildings without elevators. The chairs, which feature the innovative Stair-TREAD[®] system, allow the operator to control movement down stairs without lifting, significantly reducing the risk of injury for these transports.

In addition to keeping current employees happy with new Stryker equipment, Tanner has also benefited during new hire recruitment and interviewing with numerous recruits expressing respect for the department's high standards and excellent equipment.

Power and Ergonomics that Provide Benefits

Mike Tanner's Fairfield County EMS team has realized many of the benefits of the new Stryker Power-PRO and Stair-PRO including:

- Substantial reduction in patient handling-related injuries
- Significant savings in workers' compensation rates
- Increased productivity by reducing lost and modified days
- Advantages in employee recruitment and retention

Other EMS Providers Realizing Benefits

Tanner's Fairfield County team isn't the only EMS provider benefiting from the Stryker Power-PRO and Stair-PRO advantages. Other EMS departments at municipal, public, and private agencies across the United States are realizing similar benefits. Deployment of these proven technologies helps minimize the risk of operator injury and leads to a savings in operating costs.

As part of its normal process to obtain feedback from its customers, the Stryker EMS Equipment division polled a wide range of EMS directors to gain a better understanding of the impact of the Power-PRO powered ambulance cot and Stair-PRO stair chair on EMS service operations.

Participants, who represent EMS services with as few as 215 calls to as many as 113,000 calls annually, experienced a significant decrease in job-related injuries. After deployment of Stryker Power-PRO and Stair-PRO, average yearly job-related injuries and patient drops decreased significantly.

Tanner's estimate for the resulting savings in workers' compensation cost alone is over \$40,000 per year. On top of this, he has reported a gain in operating efficiencies and employee morale. He expects to recoup the cost of his investment and more in under two years.

Contact your Stryker EMS Account Manager for more information on this important field research.

"We have a 50-year-old female employee with a history of back trouble who, thanks to the Stryker Stair-PRO stair chair, no longer risks injury when transporting patients," Tanner comments. "She is a 20-year EMS veteran, so her experience is invaluable for us to retain and essential to the training of our younger staff."

Average yearly job-related injuries declined from 5.88 to 0.06 per service. Patient drops also declined by over 90 percent. Tanner's estimate for the resulting savings in workers' compensation cost alone is over \$40,000 per year.