

## THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT FIRE/EMS DEPARTMENT

**For Immediate Release:** August 20, 2007

**Contact:** Mark E. Brady, Public Information Officer

### Fire Chief Compelled To Address Non-Compliant Volunteer Fire Department

Prince George's County Fire Chief Lawrence H. Sedgwick, Jr. has been compelled to address the issue of the Kentland Volunteer Fire Department, Station 33, and their failure to comply with direct orders. In February, 2007, Fire Chief Sedgwick ordered the Kentland Fire Station 33 to place a County owned and supplied, basic life support (BLS), transport unit (ambulance) into service, to be housed and staffed by the existing volunteer membership who currently respond to EMS calls on pieces of fire apparatus. Since that time, the volunteer chief was removed from emergency operations for failure to obey direct orders and other disciplinary actions not germane to this issue. The current volunteer chief has offered several alternate plans at the direction of his membership, however, none have met the initial orders of the Fire Chief.

On Monday, August 20, 2007, The Fire/EMS Department advised the Kentland volunteer leadership that eight career Firefighters/Paramedics would be made available to staff the ambulance 24 hours a day – 7 days a week. The County owned and staffed ambulance would be housed and respond out of Kentland Station 33. Kentland volunteer leadership did not accept this proposal. While this plan is being considered by the Kentland membership, appropriate action has been directed to be taken. As a result of failing to meet the current deadline, Fire Chief Sedgwick has directed the Deputy Fire Chief of Emergency Operations, Lieutenant Colonel Robert McCoy, to implement the following actions for Kentland's non-compliance.

The current volunteer chief shall be immediately removed from emergency operations.

The Fire/Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Department will now confer with the next volunteer chief in the chain-of-command.

The Fire/EMS Department will reduce the amount of mutual aid responses of the Kentland Fire Department to ensure personnel are available to respond to the more than 5100 Basic Life Support (BLS) ambulance calls within their first due response area. The Fire/EMS Department will evaluate Kentland's ability to maintain adequate response to all calls in their first due prior to any adjustments. Continuity of service to the citizens shall not be reduced as the same amount of Fire/EMS units will be dispatched in accordance with standard procedures.

The volunteer leadership at Kentland Station 33 will be granted a limited amount of time to comply with orders to place the ambulance into service or face additional sanctions.