




EMS SYSTEM ADVISORY #2023-08/18

TO: Riverside County EMS System

FROM: Dan Bates, REMSA Administrator 

SUBJECT: Extreme Weather Event – Tropical Storm Hilary

DATE: August 18, 2023

An unprecedented weather event is expected to take place in Southern California this weekend, beginning sometime tomorrow, Saturday, August 19, and lasting through Monday morning. According to the National Weather Service, areas of Riverside County are expected to receive substantial rainfall starting Sunday night lasting into Monday morning, which may result in flash flooding and impassable roads.

REMSA is asking all field providers working through this event to remain vigilant and aware of changing weather conditions and remember that their safety is paramount. For crews in the Coachella Valley especially, please take a moment to read the information below regarding hospital contingency plans and how they will affect patient destinations.

Unless and until Desert Regional Medical Center (DRMC) is completely inaccessible, or ED closure criteria is met, all patients, including trauma, stroke, and STEMI will be transported there as appropriate.

Should DRMC remain accessible but experience a communication failure, then:

1. Riverside University Health System Medical Center (RUHS) will become the designated L1 trauma base for the Coachella Valley.
2. Eisenhower Medical Center (EMC) will accept all base station contacts (BSCs) that would normally go to DRMC.
3. There will be no change to stroke or STEMI destinations.

Should DRMC maintain their communication system(s) but become inaccessible due to flooding, then:

1. They will remain the designated L1 trauma base for the Coachella Valley.
2. Field crews should be prepared to be directed to transport critical trauma patients (CTPs) to EMC or John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital (JFK) for emergency stabilization.
 - a. After stabilization, EMC and JFK will utilize REMSA policy #5302 (*Continuation of Trauma Care*) to facilitate the transport of these CTPs out of the Coachella Valley, most likely to RUHS, but possibly north, to LLLUMC.
3. Stroke and STEMI patients that would normally go to DRMC will go to EMC.

Additionally, in the event that Hwy 10 between Desert Center and Blythe is affected by flooding, washouts, etc., Havasu Regional Medical Center (HRMC) in Arizona has agreed to accept any patients requiring trauma care or cardiac/STEMI services. HRMC is a designated Level III trauma center (with Level I capabilities) and STEMI center.

If you have general questions, please contact the EMS Agency at (951) 358-5029. For urgent matters, contact the REMSA Duty Officer at (951) 712-3342.

