



PRESS RELEASE

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**Ramsey Rescue Squad's Level One Program
Teaches New Members The Ropes**

RAMSEY, NJ – June 26, 2006 – On Sunday, June 26th, three members of the Ramsey Rescue Squad responded to a serious motor vehicle accident with multiple victims requiring extrication. One victim was impaled on a piece of wood that had come through the windshield.

Luckily, the accident was staged. The three members of the Squad, James Jurewicz, John Golly and Scott Tufuri were participating in a practical test of their ability to deal with serious incidents such as the one they faced. The members were completing the Extrication portion of their Level One curriculum, an in-house training program that teaches new members the basics of the Squad's core responsibilities. New Squad members are considered Probationary until they complete and successfully pass the entire curriculum in the nine-month program. If they are unable to successfully complete the Level One program, their relationship with the Squad is terminated.

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The Squad modeled the Level One Program after a similar program they discovered at the Bethesda Chevy Chase Rescue Squad located in Bethesda, MD just outside of Washington, DC. Bethesda operates a independent Rescue Squad just like Ramsey Rescue however the Bethesda organization also responds to medical calls. In 2004, the Bethesda Chevy Chase Rescue Squad responded to over 10,000 emergency calls making them one of the busiest stations in the Northeast.

In the early 1990's Ramsey Rescue members were visiting the Bethesda organization as part of a "ride-along" program. During the visit, they learned about a comprehensive training program that Bethesda had developed to ensure its members were properly trained. They brought that knowledge back to Ramsey and built the Level One Training Program, which has become the core of the Squad's training for new members.

The program, which is taught in-house by senior members, focuses on several key areas of emergency response; Extrication, Firefighting, Hazardous Materials, Confined Space Rescue, Incident Command and First Aid. Each section is taught as a module and participants have test out of the module in order to advance. If they fail on their first attempt, they can retest. If they fail again, they must retake the entire module.

"The Level One Program ensures two things." Says Joe Manfredonia, who teaches the Extrication Module "First, it ensures that all of our members get the training they need on the basics. Second, it is a barometer of a new members interest in being part of the Squad. This program is intense and



each person makes a large investment of their time to attend classes. If they aren't here to be part of the team, the Level One program weeds out those people very quickly."

In addition to the Level One Program, which is taught on Sunday's, new members must attend a minimum of two drills per month, which are held on Thursday evenings. On top of that, all members are required to certify annually in CPR, First Aid, Bloodborne Pathogens, Right to Know along other state and federally mandated training. Members must also respond to a minimum of 50% of all of the Squad's emergency calls each month in order to maintain their membership with the organization.

The Squad as a whole conducts training sessions on three Thursday evenings each month. Many members also complete outside training and are certified as Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT), Firefighters and Hazardous Materials Specialists. Those classes range from 8 hours to 110 hours or more.

"Being a member of this organization is a very time consuming commitment." Says Erik Endress, the Squad's President "Our members are not only volunteering to help their community, but they are taking a tremendous amount of training in order to do so. They should be applauded. I think some people make the mistake of judging some of our members on their age and mistakenly assume they are just "hanging out". The training these young people get, the responsibility they share in to respond and help, that all builds character and maturity. Many of our members use this experience as the first step towards their career decisions. We have members

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who have gone on to become police officers, paramedics, doctors, nurses, professional firefighters and successful business people. What we teach these folks now can have tremendous influence on their future.

Jurewicz, Golly and Tufuri failed their extrication test on Sunday, June 26th because they didn't prioritize the victims correctly; they developed tunnel vision on one of the two vehicles. As a result, the team failed and will have to take the practical test again.

"Most people fail the first time." Says Manfredonia "This is where we want them to fail, in a controlled environment. My job as their instructor is to get them ready to respond to real emergencies with real people trapped in the car, where failure is not an option. That's why we make the test so difficult."

Ramsey Rescue is a 45 person volunteer organization that serves the people of Borough of Ramsey. The Squad has operated in the community for almost 50 years. Since 2002, the Squad's roster has doubled in size in the past three years and there is currently a waiting list to apply for membership.

For more information, visit www.ramseyrescue.com.

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