



**TO:** Elizabeth Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** James P. Duggan, Fire Chief  
**COPY:** Government Performance and Finance Committee; Andy Cherullo, Committee Executive Liaison  
**PRESENTER:** Michael Newhouse, Assistant Chief of Operations, Emergency Medical Services, Tacoma Fire Department  
**SUBJECT:** Lift Assist Education and Outreach Update  
**DATE:** January 15, 2019

**PRESENTATION TYPE:**  
Informational Briefing

**SUMMARY:**

The Tacoma Fire Department (TFD) has worked to communicate the proper use of the 9-1-1 system to the management and staff of local licensed care facilities. A new penalty charge will become effective on February 1, 2019, for licensed care facilities who request non-emergent lift assistance. This presentation will brief GPFC on the education and outreach to these facilities prior to the new penalty charge becoming effective, as well as the ongoing plan for continuing the education and partnership with these facilities for the proper use of 9-1-1 and the care of the residents at these facilities.

**BACKGROUND:**

Amended Ordinance No. 28550, passed by the City Council on November 20, 2018, added a new section 6B.50.070 to the Tacoma Municipal Code, "Penalty for non-emergent lift assistance at licensed care facilities," which will become effective on February 1, 2019. The ordinance provides, in part, for a penalty charge of \$350 for the first incident of a non-emergent lift assist, \$500 for the second incident, and \$850 for each incident thereafter in 2019. As of January 1, 2020, the authorized penalty charge shall be \$850 per incident without regard to the number of prior incidents. Licensed care facilities are defined in the TMC as "a Washington State licensed care or nursing facility, such as a skilled nursing facility or an assisted living facility..." Registered adult family homes are not included in the definition and not subject to the penalty charge.

**ISSUE:**

For the past several years, the Tacoma Fire Department (TFD) has worked to communicate proper use of the 9-1-1 system to the management and staff of local licensed care facilities to reduce their reliance upon the 9-1-1 system for non-emergent lift assistance, which is not a traditional government function or an offered TFD service. TFD's efforts have included visiting facilities to review case studies; attendance at monthly meetings of the local licensed care industry, currently called the Pierce County Care Transitions Consortium, to share these concerns and provide education on the proper use of 9-1-1; and timely on scene education by our fire officers to facility staff, after providing assistance to the citizen, when responding to non-emergent incidents. Despite this ongoing effort, some local facilities continue to use the 9-1-1 system to utilize TFD personnel for non-emergent lift assists in their facilities.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

This is an information briefing only. There are no alternatives presented.

**FISCAL IMPACT:**

This is an information briefing only. There is no fiscal impact.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

This is an information briefing only. There is no recommendation.