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POWER LOAD COT INSTALLED ON MUSCATINE AMBULANCE

New system will keep patients more secure, prevent injuries to first responders

MUSCATINE, Iowa – A new cot and power loading system has been installed on one of the five Muscatine Fire Department ambulances, providing more secure patient transport and the reduction of potential back injuries to firefighters. The new system was installed last week and has already proven its worth on several calls.

“Normally paramedics would have to lift the cot into the ambulance and that could put the firefighters at risk to back and shoulder injuries,” Lieutenant Jonathan Wieland said. “This power load system eliminates that risk while also making transport of the patient safer.”

The battery operated system cost \$47,000 and was budgeted for in the Fire Department’s 2019-2020 budget request.

“Eventually this system will be required for all new ambulances,” Muscatine Fire Chief Jerry Ewers said.

Battalion Chief Ted Hillard explained that the increased obesity of patients and potential for back injuries to paramedics was behind the development of the power lift system.

“With the increase of obesity in patients, new equipment and technology has expanded to make the job easier and safer for paramedics, which reduces back injuries, work comp cases, and enables ambulance services to transport patients safely,” Hillard said.

Hillard noted that the battery powered cots that the Fire Department currently has do not have a power assist lift into the ambulance and are lifted manually with patient intact.

“While helping to prevent injuries to the paramedics, the new system also makes the patient transfer more secure,” Wieland said. “The cots are locked down in the current system but can still move a little during transport. The new system prevents that movement making the transport safer for both the patient and the paramedics.”

Depending on budgetary needs, the Fire Department plans to add more power lift systems and cots to its fleet of ambulances.