

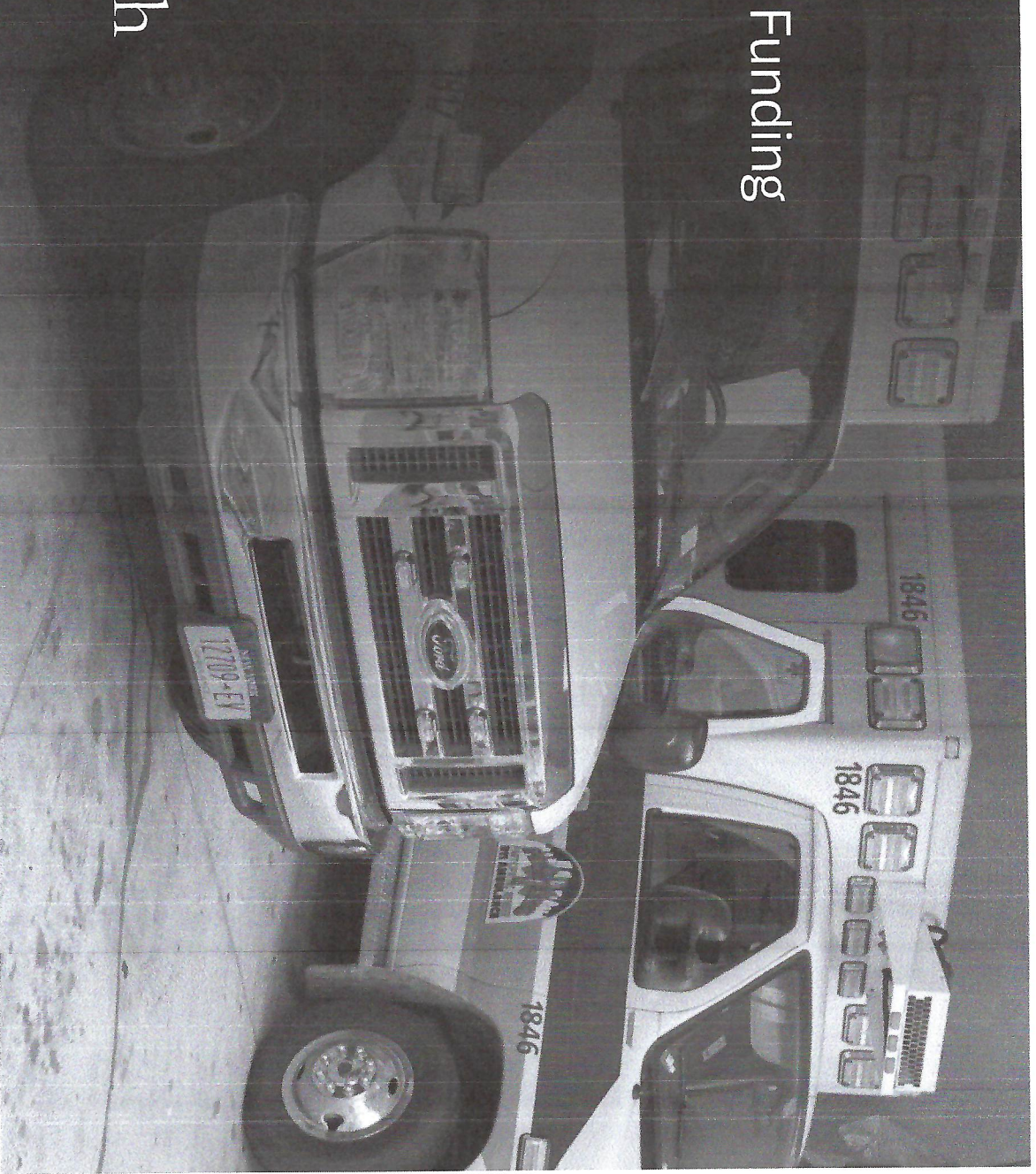
Developing Sustainable Funding for Fire/EMS Response

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Wisconsin Office of
Rural Health



Wisconsin Office of Rural Health

UW-Madison School of Medicine and
Public Health

Rural EMS Outreach Program

- Improve Reliability and Sustainability of EMS systems
- Free Technical Assistance to Wisconsin Municipalities



Disclaimer

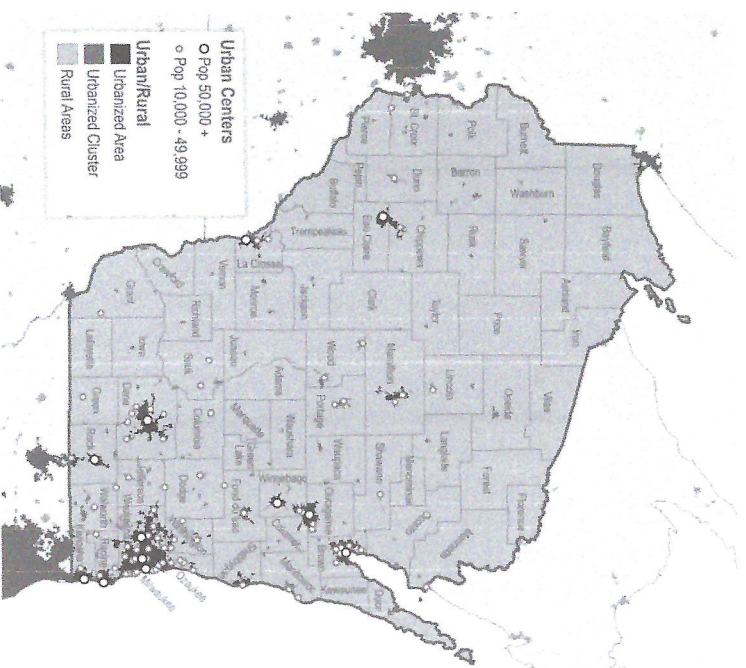
This presentation is designed to demonstrate ways to support Fire/EMS response

Each community is unique and must consider its specific needs

Always consult with municipality's attorney prior to contracting or using other methods to provide service

Always consult with DOR prior to making change to your funding mechanisms

How is Wisconsin's EMS System performing?



- 5.9 Million population
 - 30 % Rural
- 72 Counties
- 1,850 local governments
 - 1265 Townships
 - 585 City and Villages
 - 11 Tribal Governments
- 97% of Land Area is Rural

EMS has significant reliability issues...

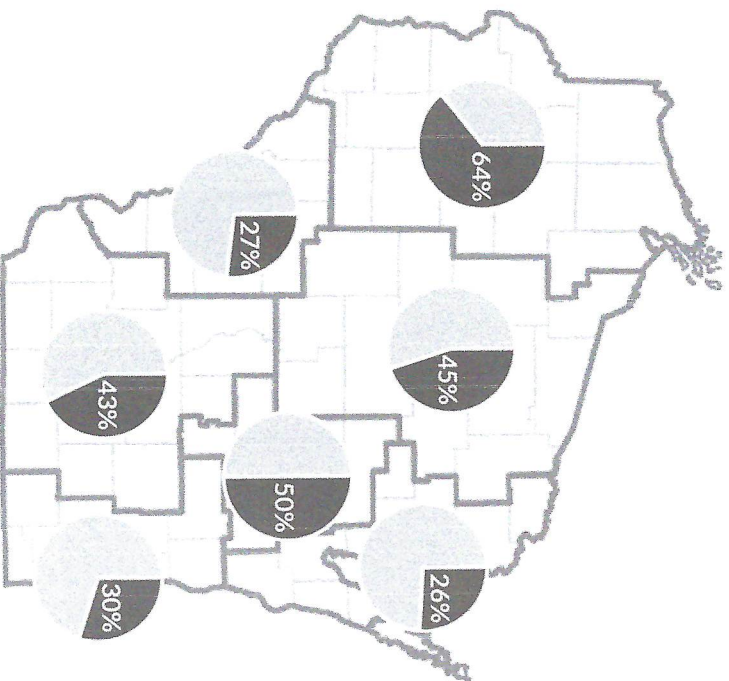
41%

Lacked Reliability

Reported not staffed 24/7/365
in the past 12 months

55% Rural vs 12% Urban

63% Volunteer Vs 15% Paid

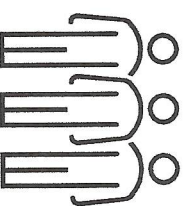


EMS has significant sustainability issues...

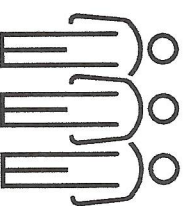
24/7/365 requires 17,520 hours (7 FTE)

How many people do 80% of the work?

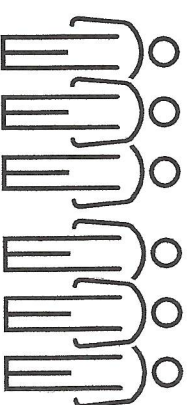
- 21% 2-3 people



- 27% rural vs 10% urban



- 20% 4-6 people



- 29% rural vs 7% urban



6 or fewer

Volunteer 62% vs Paid 16%

How is your provider doing? Failing or Failed?

RELIABILITY

- How many times is the past 12 months has there been a time on the schedule when a first due ambulance would not have been able to respond due to lack of personnel?

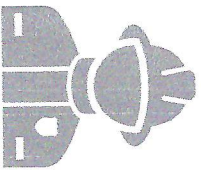
SUSTAINABILITY

- How many people are doing 80% (14,016) of the staffing in the previous year?
- Less than 7 is at high risk of unexpected service outages

- This must be ZERO

- Not keeping a schedule is considered unreliable

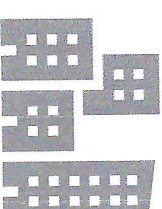
Are we required to have these Services?



60.55(1)(a) The Town Board shall provide for fire protection for the town.

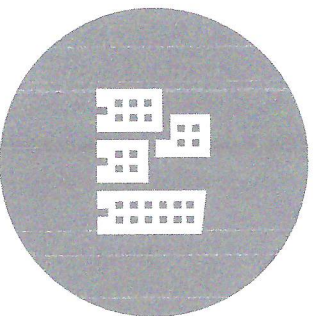


60.565 The Town Board shall contract for or operate and maintain ambulance services

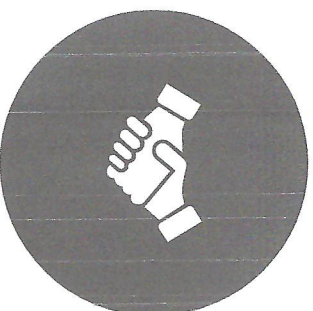


Villages and Cities have varying rules based on populations

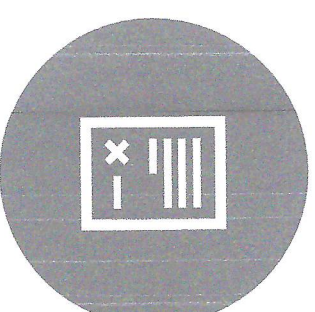
How is this done?



YOUR MUNICIPAL OWNED
SERVICE



PROVIDING IN
COLLABORATION WITH
ANOTHER MUNICIPALITY



CONTRACTING FOR SERVICES

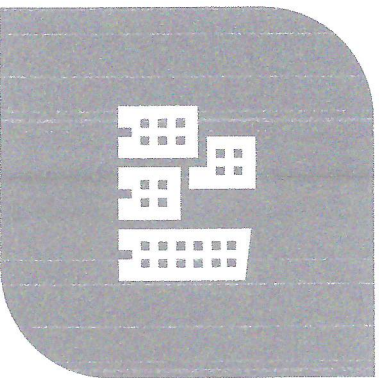
1. The first step in the process of identifying a problem is to recognize that a problem exists. This involves gathering information about the situation and identifying the specific issue that needs to be addressed.

- [illegible]

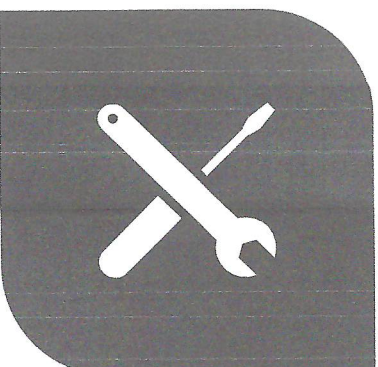
Goals When Contracting for Service

- Equitable cost sharing
- The provider should not be subsidizing the cost
- Funding is sustainable to provide future services
- Receive the same service as provider unless there are areas excluded
- Place emphasis on maintaining strong regional services

Paying for Services



MUNICIPAL FINANCE IS VERY
DIFFERENT THAN HOUSEHOLD
FINANCE.



MUNICIPALITIES HAVE MANY TOOLS
AVAILABLE TO FUND COMMUNITY
NEEDS

Common Funding Sources



Volunteers



Tax Levy



Shared
revenue



Debt



Fire fee



EMS Billing

Volunteer Staffing



Personnel provide labor at significantly discounted cost



Personnel are personally subsidizing costs



4 Times more likely to become failed systems



Volunteerism in society is approximately 1/3 of what it was when EMS started

Tax Levy

Typical funding source

Strict Statutory limits

Can Exceed by Referendum

Towns under 3,000 population
can exceed on vote of electors

Shared Revenue 2023 Act 12

**Paid from State to
Municipality**

**Supplemental program
has limits on usage**

Maintenance of Effort

Debt

Borrowing to accomplish projects

May not exceed 5% of equalized value

Best used for capital projects

**No limit on annual debt payments
being placed on the levy**

**Some rules may apply related to
purchasing**

Fire Fee

60.55 (2)(b) The Town Board may charge property owners a fee for the cost of fire protection to their property according to a written fee schedule established by the Town Board

Requires a partial levy reduction of the amount levied in 2013

No limit on the fee increases.

Complex to implement in year 1

Can fund EMS if it is provided as part of fire response

EMS Billing

Recovery is less than
50% of amount billed

Difficult to predict from
year to year

Is not enough to cover
cost of service

Other

Situation:

Districts

Intermunicipal Agreements of Joint
Ownership

Municipal Partners can levy 2% + CPI
to service joint district.

*May have restrictions on eligibility

District can be used to contract for
services in a region

Other

Situation:

County Wide EMS

66.0602(3)(e)6 The amount a County levies for a Countywide Emergency Medical System is exempt from levy limits.

Currently used by 14 counties with more coming in 2025 and 2026

Many ways this funding is used to support services

**EMS Service is EXPENSIVE
and will become more costly**

**Solutions are specific to each
community**

**Consider how decisions
impact regional sustainability**

Summary

Resources

Wisconsin Department of
Revenue

League of Wisconsin
Municipalities

Wisconsin Towns Association

Wisconsin Office of Rural
Health

Final Thoughts on Fire/EMS Systems

- Every system produces exactly the output it is designed to create
- Volunteer Staffing models are no longer feasible
- Dysfunction is Expensive
- Effective change takes planning and execution
- Government is designed to be slow and deliberate



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