



**STEVEN J. HOOK**  
CHIEF



**CITY of WEST ALLIS**  
FIRE DEPARTMENT

To: Honorable Mayor Devine and members of the Common Council  
 From: Chief Steven J. Hook *SH*  
 Date: December 23, 2008  
 Re: Fire Department participation in electronic ambulance billing test

At the December 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of the West Allis Board of Police and Fire Commissioners, the Commissioners approved my request to participate as a beta test site for electronic ambulance data collection and billing. LifeQuest, our billing agent since 1993, is studying the feasibility of providing clients with all software and equipment to collect accurate data, decrease reporting liability and maximize revenue collection.

I've attached the detailed communication that I provided for members of the Commission. The detail explains our commitment to the program and discusses our compliance with current purchasing policies, including support from the City Attorney's office.


I am submitting the request for your approval. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have.

Thank you for your continued interest in, and support of our fire and emergency medical services.



STEVEN J. HOOK  
CHIEF

CITY of WEST ALLIS  
FIRE DEPARTMENT

Date: December 15, 2008  
To: West Allis Board of Police and Fire Commissioners  
From: Steven J. Hook, Fire Chief   
Re: Request for approval to serve as beta test site for LifeQuest electronic ambulance billing

My staff and I have recently been considering a proposal by LifeQuest, our ambulance billing agent, to provide electronic billing services. In considering the proposal, AC Steven Bane and I have met with Gene Baietto and Robert Barwick from our Purchasing Department, Gary Schmid, our City Comptroller, Paul Ziehler, City Administrator, and Sheryl Kuhary and Scott Post, from our City Attorney's office. These meetings have addressed issues with LifeQuest's proposal that enable us to work with the company as a beta test site rather than as an electronic billing client. LifeQuest currently has no electronic billing clients. We have over 23 years of ambulance billing experience with them, and have found them to be a very reliable, efficient billing agent.

LifeQuest has proposed providing laptop computers and software to our paramedics and EMTs. Our personnel would use the equipment to gather pertinent information to complete their patient care record, as well as collect insurance and Medicare or Medicaid information that LifeQuest would use for billing. LifeQuest would also report our patient-care data to the State, as required and would help our IT personnel create a link to the Milwaukee County Emergency Medical Services data collection resource for quality assurance as required by our paramedic contract. LifeQuest also will make their wireless system available for our use in accessing City records and vital response information.

Financial incentive for LifeQuest to provide these services is a better return on their billing rate. LifeQuest will not change the billing rate that we've had in place for over 10 years, but will help our firefighters gather better information and will perform their own services more efficiently.

Since our participation does not transfer ownership of any equipment or require any contractual agreement, I am seeking your approval in its operational concept only. Once your Board approves our participation, I will provide an informational session for members of the Common Council at a January meeting. Of course, once we (or LifeQuest) seek any form of contractual obligation, we will be compelled to enter into the competitive bidding process. I will provide regular reports on our equipment utilization and progress.

Thanks you, in advance for your support in this important endeavor. If you have any questions or concerns about this process or any of the equipment we will be using, please contact me.