



## Medics rescue by boat

### Aquatic life squad to patrol Ohio River

*By Crystal Harden, Post staff reporter*

The Boone County Water Rescue Team expects to work as a full-fledged aquatic life squad this year.

The team recently applied for a certificate of need from the state for the service but was told none was needed.

The rescue team has an ambulance boat carrying the same equipment as a normal life squad.

In the past, emergency medical technicians from various fire departments have ridden on the boat to provide medical treatment when needed.

'We're already actually working it as an ambulance,' said Dale Appel, chief of the rescue team.

'We're attempting to make it more of a certified squad. We were told we can work on our own without permission. We're the only one that has a floating squad, and they don't have regulations that cover that. We're perfectly within our legal rights to act as a full-fledged squad.'

All of the volunteers working on the boat will be trained as emergency medical technicians, said Bill Appleby, director of the county's emergency management office.

Appleby said he couldn't find another agency operating an inland water ambulance elsewhere in the United States.

'There are some along the coastal areas,' he said.

Operating the ambulance allows the rescue team to provide faster and more complete medical treatment to people on the river who need it, Appleby said.

Rescue workers have treated people for cuts, bruises, broken bones, heart attacks, strokes and heat exhaustion at no charge.

The boat usually responds to distress calls that come over the marine radio or from emergency calls placed by cellular telephone.

The team patrols the Ohio River along Boone County and Kenton County by contract.

The team also will respond to an emergency in Campbell or Gallatin counties if it is near those borders and no one else can respond to the call.

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