

# Landing Zone and Safety

*Without exception, safety is air medical service's top priority*

## Requesting a helicopter

We request that private citizens call 9-1-1.

Police, fire and EMS: Please call us if you need a LZ Safety Class.

Request a helicopter through the appropriate agency, such as your dispatch center, with the following information:

- Location cross street
- Location LAT/LONG coordinates
- Any prominent features at the scene
- Notify all involved communications centers if any other air medical service has been contacted and the status of that agency. Always inform all communications centers if other aircraft are anticipated to be in the area.
- Your call-back number
- Scene radio frequency and CTCSS tone
- Call sign of LZ (Landing Zone) Command.. One person should be designated to coordinate LZ setup and communicate with responding aircraft. This person should not be involved with patient care.
- Weather, including low ceilings, poor visibility, icing, and high winds
- Patient status, such as number, condition, age, approximate patient weight, mechanism of injury, and hazards
- LZ details. The preferred landing zone is 100 x 100 feet.
- ALWAYS RELAY ANY INFORMATION PERTAINING TO HAZMAT TO THE COMMUNICATIONS CENTER WHEN REQUESTING AIR MEDICAL SERVICE.

## Landing Zone Setup

Set up the LZ as follows:

- SIZE should be 100 feet by 100 feet
- LEVEL: Select a LZ as level as possible (minimal slope)
- LANDING SURFACE: Select a hard surface, grassy surface, or hard-packed snow. Avoid loose dirt, dust, or powder snow.
- CLEAR OVERHEAD free of obstructions such as wires, antennas, or poles
- CLEAR AREA free of debris, large rocks, posts, stumps, vehicles, people, animals, and other hazards
- MARK THE AREA clearly using five weighted cones or beacons, one at each corner of the LZ and one on the side that wind is coming from
- SELECT AN ALTERNATE LZ. Plan for an alternate LZ because the pilot may determine your LZ to be unsafe.
- HAZMAT: Always relay any information pertaining to HAZMAT to the communications center when requesting air medical service. Always inform the pilot and medical crew of HAZMAT. When selecting a LZ find a site at least 1/4 to 1 mile UPWIND from the incident depending on the type and materials involved. Avoid low areas where vapors may collect. The patient must be removed from the hot zone. All patients must be decontaminated PRIOR to flight.

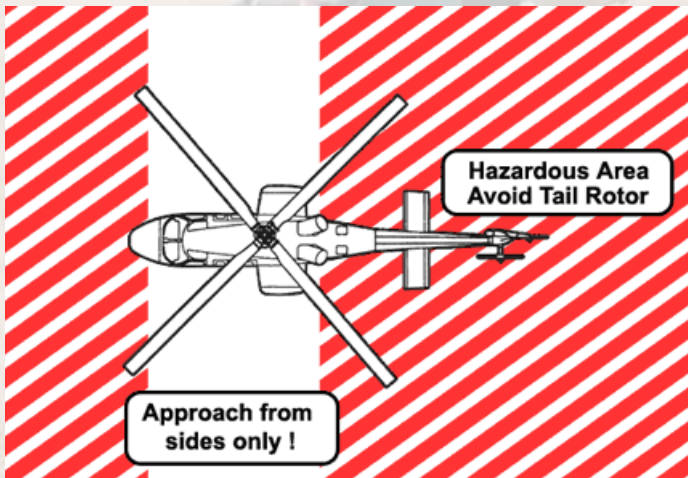
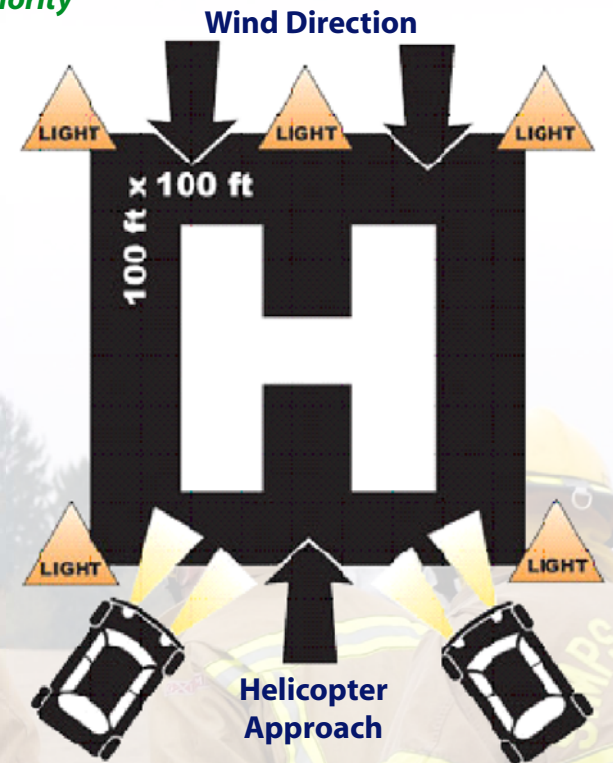
## When the helicopter is overhead

Air medical service will establish radio contact on the assigned frequency with LZ Command three to five minutes out.

Describe the following:

- LZ location
- Lighting
- Hazards
- Overhead wires, including wires along the approach path to the LZ
- Obstructions
- Slope
- Surface conditions
- Wind direction and speed if known

Maintain radio contact at all times until the helicopter has landed, loaded, and departed the area.



## Important Tips

- **Never approach the aircraft until instructed to do so and only as instructed by the pilot or flight crew aboard**
- Approach angles over obstacles should be less than 20 degrees
- Always keep LZ clear of people and other potential hazards
- Under no circumstances should you ever approach the aircraft from the rear

## Night Landing Zone

- DO NOT SHINE LIGHTS DIRECTLY AT THE HELICOPTER
- Set up night landing zones with five strobes or other secured lights. Do not use cones, flares, or tape to mark the site.
- Emergency vehicles may be parked so their headlights intersect the middle of the landing site and/or parked underneath wires to mark them. Turn strobes of emergency vehicles off as the aircraft approaches.
- Lights may be shown onto poles indicating wires between the poles
- Night landing zones always require good communications, lighting, and alertness
- Turn off all emergency lights after aircraft has started approach
- One strobe should be on the side that the wind is coming from
- If no strobes are available mark with other lighting systems
- If no other portable lights are available, cross headlight beams into the wind at the center of the landing zone



**Kentucky Board of Emergency Medical Services**  
**Air Medical Task Force**

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