

WEMSI WEMT Classes

Classes based on the WEMSI Wilderness EMT Curriculum fall into four types: WEMSI-Conducted Classes, WEMSI-Recognized Classes, non-recognized classes, and adaptations. WEMSI conducts classes only at the request of a state or national government or its lead search and rescue agency. Such classes help the state or nation develop its own WEMT program. Most recently, WEMSI has taught such classes for the Irish Mountain Rescue Association and the Maryland Institute for EMS Systems.

Adaptations

The WEMSI Wilderness EMT Curriculum is a comprehensive curriculum for EMTs, paramedics, and other prehospital professionals. Assuming students have EMT and SAR training (see below), the Curriculum provides intensive training on Wilderness EMS. For certain situations, prehospital providers may not need all of the Curriculum. Organizations are welcome to incorporate WEMT modules, or portions, into their training.

An example is a rural EMS agency— their personnel need to deal with delayed transport, but not with specifics of the wilderness environment or search and rescue. Or, urban disaster response teams— again, certain portions of the Curriculum apply, others don't. Organizations may wish to integrate parts of the Curriculum into their own wilderness classes, or use it to upgrade their training. SAR teams or EMS agencies may wish to use WEMSI WEMT modules for continuing education. Some organizations may want to use parts of the Curriculum for training outdoor trip leaders. We welcome such uses; our only request is for acknowledgement when the Curriculum is used this way.

Non-Recognized WEMSI WEMT Classes

The WEMSI Curriculum may be used freely by any organization or individual. An organization could use the entire WEMSI Curriculum to mount its own WEMT course. There is no requirement for special permission to do this; the Lesson Plans and Course Guide may be freely copied (see below). The textbook is copyrighted and will be commercially published. Until

the text is commercially published, course sponsors may arrange to get preliminary student text materials from WEMSI.

WEMSI-Recognized Classes

Organizations may sponsor WEMT courses based on the WEMSI Curriculum, and, provided they meet certain basic requirements for quality control, may issue WEMSI course completion certificates and patches. Students in WEMSI-Recognized WEMT classes must complete specified lectures, complete required practical exercises, and successfully complete the standard WEMSI written and practical tests. There is a minimal charge for patches, certificates, and test processing. Sponsoring organizations are responsible for all other financial arrangements with faculty and students, for instructor selection and monitoring, and for quality control.

Several organizations currently conduct WEMSI-Recognized classes. The Center for Emergency Medicine offers WEMSI WEMT classes in the Laurel Highlands of western Pennsylvania, the western edge of the Appalachian Mountains. Field exercises are held in the Laurel Mountains. These courses are offered each fall on a 6-day-long basis, and in the spring when there is sufficient demand. Those wishing to run their own class are advised to attend this, WEMSI's premier class. WEMSI-recognized courses are also offered on a six-day-long basis as part of the "weeklong" cave rescue training offered by Eastern Region, National Cave Rescue Commission. This training is held each summer, in the mountains just south of Elkins, West Virginia. Field exercises are held underground in nearby caves. WEMSI-recognized courses are also currently offered in north-central and south-central Pennsylvania, and in Ireland.

Wilderness Command Physician Classes

The Center for Emergency Medicine offers a WEMSI Wilderness Command Physician class at each fall's western Pennsylvania WEMT class. This two-day class is designed for physicians already providing medical direction to prehospital EMS personnel. It acquaints these physicians with the nature and extent of

Wilderness EMT training, and the environmental constraints, long-term medical direction, medical problems, and other vicissitudes of wilderness EMS. The Wilderness Command Physician class includes some exposure to the field (observing Wilderness EMT students during field exercises). However, it does **not** prepare physicians to participate Wilderness EMS in the field. Physicians are welcome to attend the entire Wilderness EMT class if they wish to participate in Wilderness EMS in the field. WEMSI WEMT and Wilderness Command Physician classes are oriented specifically to the needs of search and rescue teams. Physicians looking for general training in wilderness medicine should investigate the training offered at the annual meetings of the Wilderness Medical Society (P.O. Box 2463, Indianapolis, IN 46206, 1-317-631-1745), or the Wilderness Life Support classes offered by SOLO (Stonehearth Open Learning Opportunities, RFD 1 Box 163, Conway, NH 03818, 1-603-447-6711).

Wilderness EMS Rotation

In conjunction with the Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh's Emergency Department and Eastern Region, National Cave Rescue Commission, WEMSI offers a one-month rotation in Wilderness EMS. It is specifically designed for second- and third-year residents in emergency medicine. The rotation prepares the resident to become a medical director for a wilderness search and rescue team. It is offered in conjunction with the spring and fall WEMSI western Pennsylvania WEMT classes. Further information is available from: Office of Medical Education and Research, Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh, Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh, 1400 Locust Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15219-5166, 1-412-232-8035.

Search and Rescue Prerequisite

A prerequisite for WEMSI-Conducted WEMT Classes is certification to the **Virginia Ground Search and Rescue Field Team Member** standards or equivalent SAR training. The Virginia GSAR standards are available from the Virginia Department of Emergency Services, 310 Turner Road, Richmond, VA 23225-6491. The National Cave Rescue Commission **Orientation to Cave Rescue** class is acceptable as well.

Students with EMT but not SAR training may fulfill the SAR prerequisite by attending SAR orientation classes offered immediately before each WEMSI-Conducted WEMT class. Students may obtain NCRC **Orientation to Cave Rescue** certification by attending the two days prior to the Eastern Region NCRC WEMT class. For the spring and fall western Pennsylvania WEMT classes, students may attend a **Basic Wilderness Rescue** class conducted by the Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group of the Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference (a Mountain Rescue Association team). This class is offered on a weekend shortly before the WEMT class.

Freely Usable

The Lesson Plans and Course Guide include the following notice: *This Lesson Plan was created and edited by members of a Project Task Group, and approved by the Editorial Board, of the ASRC-CEM WEMSI. It may be reproduced by any means, without written permission, if it is reproduced in whole, including this copyright notice. It may be used by any person for any use, public, private, or commercial. The WEMSI, its Task Group, Editorial Board, and Staff have attempted to assure that all material herein is accurate, but can accept no responsibility for its use. All care rendered by WEMTs must be at the direction of a licensed physician and according to applicable laws and regulations.*

WEMSI

The ASRC-CEM **Wilderness Emergency Medical Services Institute**, previously named the **Wilderness Emergency Medicine Curriculum Development Project**, is devoted to developing curricula for wilderness EMS providers and medical control physicians, fosters wilderness EMS research, and provides a model Wilderness EMS system in the mid-Appalachian states. It is a cooperative venture of the Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference and the Center for Emergency Medicine of Western Pennsylvania. The ASRC is a large, tightly-knit wilderness search and rescue organization with eight teams throughout the mid-Appalachian states. The Center for Emergency Medicine is an emergency medicine and prehospital care research and teaching organization. It provides a medical helicopter service, an emergency medicine residency, Emergency

Medical Services for Pittsburgh, and conducts related projects.

The WEMSI Wilderness EMT Curriculum

In concert with a textbook, the Curriculum has been in development since 1986, and took as its starting point a program Dr. Keith Conover developed for the National Association for Search and Rescue in 1980. The Project has also drawn on other sources. These include the Wilderness EMT program offered by SOLO (Stonehearth Open Learning Opportunities), the WEMT program developed by Wilderness Medical Associates for the National Association for Search and Rescue, and the Winter Emergency Care Course of the National Ski Patrol. The Wilderness Medical Society's educational and research publications provide needed background for the Curriculum. The National Association of EMS Physicians has published clinical guidelines for delayed/prolonged transport that apply to WEMTs. With its prerequisites, this Curriculum complies with the Wilderness Prehospital Emergency Care curriculum established by the Wilderness Medical Society. The curriculum is competency-based rather than hours-based, but can be completed in roughly five intensive days. The curriculum also provides a checklist of recommended clinical training.

The following additional free brochures are available from the Center for Emergency Medicine of Western Pennsylvania, 230 McKee Place, Suite 500, Pittsburgh, PA 2015213-4904, 1-412-578-3203, wemsi+pitt.edu:

- a current schedule of WEMSI-Recognized classes
- "The Wilderness EMS Institute"
- "The Wilderness EMT Curriculum"
- "Wilderness EMT Documents" (order form)



Wilderness EMT and Wilderness Command Physician Classes

A Project of the
Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference
and the
Center for Emergency Medicine
of Western Pennsylvania

<http://www/wemsi.org>



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