Ambulance crash in Mount Ivy causes power outage

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MOUNT IVY — Four people were taken to Nyack Hospital on Thursday after an ambulance struck a utility pole at the intersection of routes 202 and 45, authorities said.

The single-vehicle, 2:50 p.m. crash severed the bottom half of the utility pole and forced police to close the intersection until an Orange & Rockland Utilities crew could stabilize the scene and clear several low-hanging wires, authorities said.

A power outage resulted, interrupting service to more than 2,000 customers, said Mike Donovan, an O&R spokesman.

Two men staffing the Rockland Mobile Care ambulance, as well as an elderly patient and one of the patient’s family members were inside the vehicle when it crashed.

Michael Murphy, chief of operations for Rockland Mobile Care and Rockland Paramedic Services, said none of the victims was truly injured, but that they were taken to the hospital as a precautionary measure.

The victims were treated at the scene by other paramedics from Rockland Paramedic Services and from the Spring Hill Emergency Medical Services, Murphy said. “The response from our emergency service colleagues was overwhelming and comforting,” Murphy said. “Police, fire and EMS personnel were on the scene in, literally, a matter of minutes.”

Haverstraw Fire Assistant Chief John Erzen said his department was initially summoned to the crash site on reports that at least one person was trapped inside the ambulance. By the time volunteer firefighters arrived moments later, all of the crash victims had gotten out, he said.

Officials said the ambulance was coming from Good Samaritan Hospital in Suffern and traveling eastbound to a destination in Haverstraw.
Haverstraw police had not yet determined what caused the vehicle to crash, but were investigating, said Haverstraw Police Lt. Martin Lund, who said shortly after 4:30 p.m. that the intersection had been completely reopened.

Murphy said his agency’s vehicles are equipped with video cameras and that police were working to obtain the footage to aid in their investigation.

Donovan said a majority of those customers affected by the power outage had their service restored shortly after the crash. Two customers in the area, however, were expected to remain without power until the pole could be repaired. Those repairs were likely to be completed by 8 p.m. Thursday, Donovan said.