

## EMS Updates

April 29, 2005

The fire and EMS communities mourn the loss of the lives of two personnel from Evanston Fire Department and EMS. Robert Henderson a firefighter and an EMT-Intermediate and Jacob Cook a firefighter lost their lives in the line of duty on April 18<sup>th</sup>. Firefighter Abe Wheeler an EMT-Basic was transported to a Salt Lake hospital and is expected to make a full recovery. Governor Dave Freudenthal addressed several thousand who attended the funeral for these heroes. The Governor praised those who daily put their lives on the line for the citizens of this state.

May marks the national observance of EMS Week. The week of May 15-21, 2005 has been proclaimed as "Emergency Medical Services Week" by Governor Dave Freudenthal. All ambulance services should have received copies of this proclamation along with an EMS Week planning guide from ACEP. The EMS Office hopes that agencies throughout the state recognize their local EMS personnel for the time, sacrifices, and dedication to the local community. Over 85% of our ambulance attendants are volunteers. They are the backbone of our state's EMS system.

April 28<sup>th</sup> saw the Cheyenne Fire/Rescue graduate their first class of Paramedics. This pilot program is the first of its kind for Cheyenne Fire/Rescue. The students will take their National Registry exams in May in Denver. Sixteen students started this program and fourteen completed it on the 28<sup>th</sup> of April. The 88% pass rate speaks extremely well on how this class was conducted as the typical Paramedic class will see up to 30% of the initial number of student drop the program. It also represents the first non-transporting fire service to utilize Paramedics under the

revised EMS Rules and Regulations. Rock Springs Fire Department and Jackson Hole Fire/EMS are presently using EMT-Intermediates and have made application to upgrade to the Paramedic level. Jim Mayberry, EMS Program Manager has been invited to attend the State's Fire Chief's meetings. Jim was welcomed at the April meeting held in conjunction with the annual Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service. With 40% of our ambulance services linked to a fire department the need to have open communications and collaboration between EMS and the fire service serves to benefit both parties. The next meeting of the Fire Chiefs will be June 15<sup>th</sup> in Lander.

EMS System Enhancement Awards will be presented on Friday, May 13<sup>th</sup> at the 25<sup>th</sup> Shock/Trauma Conference in Jackson. Fifty-eight applications were received that met the criteria to be eligible for an award. Requests for funding exceeded \$90,000. The EMS Office had \$60,000 to disburse. Each applicant will have a portion of their request approved. The EMS Office has started to order the equipment which will be sent to identified ambulance services as it is received and inventoried.

Spring EMT-Basic classes will be finishing this month. Class coordinators are reminded to have their paperwork in order and completed by the night of the final testing. Failure

to do so will delay the certification of the classes's students. If you are having difficulties in completing the required forms get with your assigned State Trainer for assistance. Students are reminded that once they complete the EMT program that they will then need to apply for state certification. The certificate of completion that they receive does not entitle them to function as an EMT nor does having a National Registry card mean that they are certified in Wyoming. Everyone who completes the EMT class must then apply for state certification. Concerns or questions on this should be directed to a member of the EMS Office.

As part of the HRSA Bioterrorism Hospital Preparedness grant, all hospitals will receive training in the Hospital Emergency Incident Command System (HEICS) during the upcoming year. There is no cost to the hospitals for the training. The last of the twelve Advanced Burn Life Support (ABLS) classes has been set. EMS personnel are reminded that they should not be on duty or covering shift as this program is an intense day-long class that requires a students' presence during the entire course. The HRSA Bioterrorism Hospital Preparedness grant will be receiving their grant application sometime in May. If you have any ideas or suggestions on how best to allocate these funds to hospital and ambulance personnel please contact Merit Thomas at the EMS Office. Deadline for submission of the grant application will likely be July 1<sup>st</sup> and an award date of September 1st.

The EMS Office has been working with the National Registry to set up a date and location for the "stakeholders" meeting that been requested by the National Registry. This meeting, which will be open to all interested parties, is tentatively scheduled as a day-long session prior to the start of the annual trauma conference in August. As soon as it is finalized we will forward the specifics of the time and location for the meeting. As it presently stands it appears that the National Registry will be implementing their computer adaptive testing format beginning in 2007. Given the results of the survey that has been circulated it would appear that the vast majority of EMS providers in Wyoming would favor having the EMS Office provide the final written examination.

This year's allocation of AEDs is being reviewed by the EMS staff and the AEDs will be distributed to identified agencies based upon the surveys that Bob Dean has received. Additionally, the EMS Office has received notification that they have been awarded another year of funding for the purchase of AEDs. This grant cycle will commence on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

Jay Ostby is still taking requests for computers to be used for entering ambulance trip report data in to the WATRS system. If you have an old EMS computer that uses Windows 95 or Windows 98 notify Jay. The latest ambulance trip report form has generated quite a bit of discussion. If you have any comments please forward them to Jay as the form will be reviewed in the coming months for further updating.

The EMSC grant will be refocusing its efforts to look at providing additional pediatric training options for local ambulance services. The old EMSC advisory committee will be revived and anyone interested in serving on this committee is encouraged to contact

Carol Zorna at the EMS Office. It is possible that this program, which provides \$100,000 to the EMS Office's EMSC efforts, may not be renewed in the upcoming federal budget cycle. President Bush has targeted it as one of the programs to be cut as part of the attempt to reduce the federal budget deficit.

Also targeted to be eliminated in President Bush's budget are the AED grant program(\$150,000), the trauma program grant (\$40,000), and the Center for Disease Controls Health Block Grant(\$100,800). These cuts would, if sustained, amount to a loss of \$400,800 for the EMS Office. Several legislators have introduced amendments to restore these recommended cuts. Only time will tell how much the EMS Office will be impacted by these decisions.

Upcoming conferences include: 25<sup>th</sup> Shock/Trauma Conference in Jackson, the Red Desert Conference in Rock Springs, the annual Trauma Conference in Cheyenne in August, and the Bare Bones Conference also in Cheyenne in September. Specifics relative to each conference can be found on the EMS website.

Sixty-three of our seventy-two ambulance services have replaced all of their mobile radios. The remaining nine services will be contacted in regards to the status of their mobile radio replacements. As of March 31<sup>st</sup> eleven hospitals have received new base stations. It is anticipated that all ambulances and hospitals will have APCO Project 25/Wyo. Link compatible equipment installed by December of this year.

Sundance EMS recently received approval from the Board of Medicine to be authorized to use Paramedics as their staffing permits pending EMS Office approval of their revised protocols. As Sundance EMS does a majority of its runs as inter- facility transfers the need to have an RN or PA-C on board should be lessened considerably. This represents the twelfth ambulance service to be authorized by the Board to utilize Paramedics.

The EMS Office has been contacted by representatives of Casper College and Laramie County Community College in regards to the establishment of an in-state Paramedic training program. Surveys have been sent out by both institutions. At the present time, neither college has received approval from the EMS Office for a Paramedic training program. Both institutions will be invited to present their proposals at the Physician Task Force on Prehospital Care in May. The Weber State University pilot distance learning Paramedic program is progressing with the students from Rock Springs, Cody, and Sheridan receiving their didactic training in their local communities.

With Dr. Fleming leaving the Health Department, Dr. Sherard has assumed the position of Interim Director while the Governor has launched a nationwide search for a replacement for Dr. Fleming. This will be Dr. Sherard's second time as the Interim Director. The EMS programs remain under Dr. Sherard's umbrella of responsibility. In previous updates there was the announcement of the potential for the EMS programs to be moved out of their present location on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the Hathaway Building when the Supreme Court moves into the first floor of the Hathaway Building and the

administration from the first floor moves to the fourth floor. As it presently stands it appears that the EMS programs will remain in the Hathaway Building.

The development of the new EMS registry has seen the completion of the design phase. The construction and implementation phases have begun with an anticipated completion date for the project in late October or early November. Funding for this project has come from the HRSA Bioterrorism Hospital Terrorism Grant.

The EMS Office has received many telephone calls in regards to the status of WAEMSA. The EMS Office has referred all callers to the WAEMSA website or to their telephone number as the organization has not contacted the EMS Office in several months. Nor has there been a newsletter published. If your membership is due for renewal or you need conference information we encourage you to contact them directly.