



Alton Memorial Hospital Celebrates National EMS Week

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ALTON, IL -- National EMS Week (May 18-24) celebrates and honors the hundreds of thousands of EMS practitioners serving our communities across the nation. With the changes taking place in our nation's health care system, new opportunities and challenges are emerging in EMS.

“As EMS practitioners, each of us is dedicated to serving our local communities and providing the best care for our patients,” said Debbie Woelfel, EMS coordinator for Alton Memorial Hospital. “Working together with our colleagues in EMS agencies in every state and territory of our country, we proudly represent our profession.”

In 1973, President Gerald Ford authorized EMS Week to celebrate EMS. A lot has changed during the last four decades. EMS is now recognized for its role in saving lives from sudden cardiac arrest and trauma; in getting people to the hospitals best equipped to treat heart attacks and strokes; and in setting the stage for a positive care experience – not just through medical skill, but by showing caring and compassion to patients in scary, distressing situations.

Then, as now, is a time of great change in EMS. Today, health care reform and the Affordable Care Act are fueling innovations and a shift in the way that medical care is paid for – changes that pose challenges and opportunities for EMS. With the continued development of alternate EMS delivery models such as Mobile Integrated Healthcare and Community Paramedicine, hospitals and health insurers are increasingly looking to EMS to take on additional responsibilities in filling gaps in health care in communities throughout the United States.

With so much influx, there is no better moment to celebrate how far EMS has come, to remind communities about the vital work of EMS practitioners, and to lay plans for where EMS wants to go in the future.

“As we celebrate with a free Alton EMS Symposium on May 20 at Lewis and Clark Community College and with an EMS Picnic on May 23, EMS Week is the perfect time to recognize all in EMS for the integral role they play in the health care system and in their communities,” Woelfel said. “Please take time during EMS Week and thank all of our agencies (*listed below*) for their dedication.”

The AMH EMS system is also in the process of adding 15 Madison County 911 agencies.

Alton Fire Department
Alton Memorial Ambulance Service
Alton Volunteer Emergency Corporation
Bethalto Village Fire Department
Brighten Betsey-Ann Fire Protection District
Bunker Hill Ambulance
Bunker Hill Fire Department
Cottage Hills Fire Department
Dorsey Fire Department
East Alton Fire Department
Fosterburg Fire Department
Godfrey Fire Department
Hartford Fire Department
Holiday Shore Fire Department
Lewis and Clark Community College
Meadowbrook Fire Department
Midwest Occupational Medicine Ltd., which also includes Holten Meat, Dynegy
Midwest, Amsted Rail and Continental Tire
Olin Brass Fire Department
Phillips 66 Wood River Refinery
Prairietown Fire Department
Raging Rivers Waterpark
Rosewood Heights Fire Department
Roxana Fire Department
South Roxana Fire Department
St. Louis Children’s Transport
St. Louis Children’s Fixed Wing
St. Louis Children’s Helicopter
St. Louis Regional Airport
Winchester Fire Department
Wood River Fire Department



Debbie Woelfel of the Alton Memorial Hospital EMS Department fits a child with a bike helmet at the recent AMH Family Safety Fest.