

# **Alton Memorial Celebrates Emergency Medical Services Week: May 16-22 Honors First Responders Who ‘Anytime, Anywhere, We’ll be There’**

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*(ALTON, IL)* – The American College of Emergency Physicians (ACEP) will kick off the 37th annual Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Week starting May 16 with events in communities across the nation, as well as several national events organized around the theme, “Anytime. Anywhere. We'll be there.”

Alton Memorial Hospital Emergency Medical Services is marking EMS Week with a picnic for its personnel on Friday, May 21. The picnic will be from 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the EMS headquarters, 161 N. Bellwood Drive in East Alton.

AMH will give a special recognition and thanks to the various EMS agencies that are out in the area every day, including Alton Memorial Ambulance Service, Alton Fire Department, Alton Volunteer Emergency Corp., Bethalto Fire Department, Brighton Fire Department, Conoco-Phillips Refinery, Cottage Hills Fire Department, Dorsey Fire Department, East Alton Fire Department, Fosterburg Fire Department, Godfrey Fire Department, Hartford Fire Department, Holiday Shores Fire Department, Meadowbrook Fire Department, Prairietown Fire Department, Raging Rivers Water Park, Rosewood Heights Fire Department, Roxana Fire Department, South Roxana Fire Department, St. Louis Regional Airport and Wood River Fire Department.

EMS providers include paramedics, emergency medical technicians, first responders, fire fighters and police. National EMS Week will feature hundreds of grassroots activities coast-to-coast, including safety demonstrations, fire truck and ambulance tours, blood pressure screenings and educational programs.

Child Safety and Injury Prevention Day will be celebrated on May 19. This annual observance draws attention to the specialized need for pediatric emergency care to ensure that every child in the nation receives the highest quality emergency care possible.

“People know when they call 911 they'll get help, no matter what their circumstance,” said Angela Gardner, M.D., president of the American College of Emergency Physicians. “One of the great rewards for every rescuer is to be part of the effort that saves a life. The less dramatic actions of EMS responders are just as important to a patient or family who are facing the unknown with fear and pain. Their presence and caring can have an impact far beyond the expert clinical care they provide.”

Always call EMS if someone needs immediate medical treatment. To make this decision, ask yourself the following questions:

1. Is the person's condition life-threatening?
2. Could the person's condition worsen and become life-threatening on the way to the hospital?
3. Does the person require the skills or equipment of paramedics or emergency medical technicians?
4. Could the distance or traffic conditions cause a delay in getting the person to the hospital? If your answer to any of these questions is “yes,” or if you are unsure, it’s best to call EMS. Paramedics and EMTs can begin medical treatment at the scene and on the way to the hospital and alert the emergency department of the person's condition en route.

When you call for help, speak calmly and clearly. Give your name, address and phone number; give the location of the patient and describe the problem. Don’t hang up until the dispatcher tells you to, because he may need more information or give you instructions.

Be ready to help while you wait for emergency services to arrive. Action can mean anything from applying direct pressure on a wound, performing CPR or splinting an injury. It may also mean keeping the person calm and telling emergency responders what you know of the person’s accident, illness or medical history. Never perform a medical procedure if you’re unsure about how to do it.

