



LAKELAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: Thursday, July 31, 2014

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Emergency Medical Care in Lakeland Just Got Even Better

Lakeland --- The Lakeland Fire Department (LFD) is pleased to announce that as of July 31, 2014 every one of its 141 emergency response personnel is certified in Prehospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS).

So what does that mean for the community the department serves? PHTLS, designed by the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT), improves the quality of trauma care provided by emergency responders and significantly decreases mortality in patients. PHTLS promotes critical thinking as the foundation of quality care by equipping practitioners with knowledge that allows them to make crucial decisions in the field regarding patient care; particularly useful when every second counts. The high level of skills developed by PHTLS training will also allow EMT's to recognize traumatic injuries and illness in the field so that patients can be better prioritized based on their needs.

What makes this accomplishment so significant is that for most fire departments that offer emergency medical services, PHTLS is typically reserved for Paramedics because of their ability to offer Advanced Life Support (ALS) services. To better bridge the gap in the level of service provided between Paramedics and Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT) in the field, the Lakeland Fire Department resolved to train every one of its emergency responders in PHTLS. This accomplishment makes LFD one of the few fire departments in the region to have every emergency responder trained in Prehospital Trauma Life Support, further contributing to the exceptional level of emergency medical care it provides to the residents and visitors of Lakeland.

The Lakeland Fire Department became an approved NAEMT training site in early 2014, allowing the PHTLS training effort to take place in July 2014, provided by a team of the department's Paramedics who are certified NAEMT instructors. The PHTLS program is recognized internationally as the premier prehospital education program. It was developed and provided by the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians, which is the national professional association that represents all EMT's and Paramedics.

More about the Lakeland Fire Department:

The Lakeland Fire Department provides comprehensive and quality fire, emergency medical and special operations emergency response services to the City of Lakeland and portions of unincorporated Lakeland. The department also provides fire prevention education, inspection, plans review and code enforcement services to its 84-square mile service area located in West Central Florida. The department is made up of 141 sworn emergency responders on the line, and has 161 personnel collectively. Of the 141 emergency responders 63 are paramedics and 78 are EMT's. The department's paramedic to EMT ratio is one of the highest in the region. Much more information about the department is available online at <http://www.lakelandgov.net/ldf>.

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Gary Ballard, Fire Chief

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