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May 16, 2014

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EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WEEK CELEBRATES VIRGINIA'S DEDICATED PROVIDERS

May 18 - 24 is EMS Week in Virginia

(RICHMOND, Va.) During your most desperate hour of need, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel are one of the first responders to arrive on the scene. Providers are dedicated to delivering quality care from the time a call is received at the 911 center until the patient's arrival at the hospital. Last year, EMS providers responded to nearly 1.3 million calls for help in Virginia, approximately 3,521 incidents per day.

As proclaimed by Governor Terry McAuliffe, May 18 – 24, 2014, is EMS Week in Virginia. It honors EMS responders' commitment to providing lifesaving services. EMS for Children Day, May 21, focuses on raising awareness of pediatric patients through specialized training.

"It's important to recognize and thank the nearly 35,000 EMS providers in more than 650 EMS agencies across the Commonwealth, who provide quality emergency medical care to those in need," said State Health Commissioner Marissa J. Levine, MD, MPH, FAAFP. "We appreciate their commitment to promoting and protecting the health of all Virginians. Their dedication to people in Virginia is commendable."

"It takes a special person to become a certified EMS provider. It takes someone who is dedicated to serving the community and rendering superior prehospital care 24 hours a day, seven days a week," said Gary Brown, Virginia Office of EMS director. "While this job can be trying and at times thankless, we want to commend our EMS providers for their tireless efforts. We appreciate the countless hours devoted to continuing education, training and patient care. We invite you to join us in thanking our local EMS providers during this special week."

Many EMS agencies across the state will host community-centered activities including first aid classes, health and safety fairs, open houses, fundraising dinners and more. These family-friendly events welcome everyone to come out and get to know the first responders in their neighborhoods.

To honor Virginia's fallen fire and EMS personnel, Fire and EMS Memorial Week will take place June 8 – 14, 2014. This event, in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Fire Programs Fallen Firefighter Memorial Service, honors fire and EMS providers who died in the line of duty and recognizes those who risk their lives daily to serve and protect the people. The Annual Fallen Firefighters Memorial Service will be held June 7 at 12 p.m. at the Richmond International Raceway.

To learn more about the Virginia Office of EMS, visit www.vdh.virginia.gov/oems.

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