



## Paramedic Association of Manitoba

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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## Health Minister Proclaims May 18 – 24, 2008 Emergency Medical Services Awareness Week

### For Immediate Release

**2008/05/17** – In recognition of the vital service provided by Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel throughout the Province, Health Minister Theresa Oswald has proclaimed May 18 – 24, 2008 to be **Emergency Medical Services Awareness Week** in Manitoba.

This year's international theme for EMS Week, "**Your Life is Our Mission**", symbolizes the commitment that Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel make to the communities they serve. Their dedication to this mission ensures round-the-clock emergency response and medical care to communities throughout the province.

Although primarily associated with ambulances, emergency medical services is really a system of dedicated professionals who provide timely and appropriate pre-hospital care to sick and injured people. Beginning with the initial emergency call for help, our EMS system includes Emergency Medical Dispatchers, community based First Responders, as well as Primary and Advanced Care Paramedics in both ground and air transport ambulances.

"EMS Awareness Week is an excellent opportunity to recognize the significant contributions made each and every day by all pre-hospital care providers in communities right across our province", says Eric Glass, Chairman of the Paramedic Association of Manitoba. "It also offers a tremendous forum for the public to learn more about early recognition of medical emergencies, appropriate use of our emergency medical services system, and the importance of personal health awareness and injury prevention".



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A sudden illness or injury can happen anywhere at anytime. Signs of a potential life-threatening emergency can include:

- pain, tightness, heaviness or pressure in the chest
- difficulty breathing
- severe or uncontrolled bleeding
- sudden persistent weakness or numbness
- decreased level of consciousness
- sudden confusion or disorientation
- sudden onset of difficulty speaking or blurred vision.

There are over 1,200 licensed EMS providers in Manitoba, from Emergency Medical Dispatchers and First Responders to Advanced Care Paramedics. Manitoba ambulance services operate 160 land ambulances, and respond to more than 115,000 emergency calls each year. In addition there are approximately 3,500 air medical transports in our province annually.

Ambulance services across the province will be hosting public relations and educational events throughout EMS Awareness Week. This is an excellent opportunity for Manitobans to better understand the importance of Emergency Medical Services within our health care system, and recognize that timely and appropriate emergency care not only improves survival and recovery rates, but also saves countless lives every year.

For more information about Emergency Medical Services in your area, you can contact your Regional Health Authority or local EMS operator.

The Paramedic Association of Manitoba is the professional association for paramedics licensed in Manitoba, promoting excellence in pre-hospital emergency medical care.

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