



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, JULY 17, 2013

FIRST RESPONDERS SIGN HISTORIC EMS AGREEMENT

*Pact will allow better coordination, more
efficient delivery of emergency medical care*

Taxpayers and those in need of emergency medical care will benefit from a new EMS Joint Powers Agreement signed today. Ada County, the cities of Boise and Meridian, the Eagle and Kuna fire districts and the North Ada County Fire & Rescue District have agreed to work together to provide a unified approach to emergency services.

The agreement means two important things for those who live, work in or visit Ada County:

- **For Patients:** By creating unified operating procedures and consistent medical protocols, Boise Valley residents can be confident that they will receive the highest level of care regardless of where their emergency occurs.
- **For Taxpayers:** Working together to provide unified emergency response will reduce waste and remove duplication in expenses -- without reducing quality of service.

"Through this agreement, elected officials have put aside political boundaries for the betterment of the entire Ada County community," said Ada County Commission Chairman Dave Case. "This allows our first responders to meet the unique emergency medical needs throughout the county. We all look forward to the successes under the great collaborative agreement."

"All of these first responders provide first rate emergency care, but until now they have largely been working separately," Mayor David Bieter said. "When your life is on the line you want to receive the highest quality care as quickly as possible. This agreement will ensure that happens by making sure all first responders are working from the same playbook."

"As a community, we are stronger when we work together," said Meridian Mayor Tammy de Weerd. "I commend all of the people who put in countless hours to make this new agreement possible. By working together and planning for the future as a team, we will continue to ensure each one of our citizens gets the highest level of emergency care possible."

The agreement calls for the creation of a Joint Powers Board, made up of elected officials from each involved entity, to make decisions affecting the countywide deployment of EMS resources, including mobile services like ambulances and personnel as well as fixed services like stations and base locations.

The agreement establishes two Medical Directors, one from St. Luke's Health System and the other from Saint Alphonsus Health System. Together, the doctors will oversee and coordinate training and procedures used by each agency. The goal is to ensure that the standard of care delivered to patients in the field is of the highest quality and consistent regardless of the responding agency or the patient's location within the county.

"This is a huge step in the progression of insuring the highest possible level of Emergency Medical Care in Ada County," said Kuna Fire District Chairman Joe Stear.

"Our goal is to ensure all Ada County residents continue receiving the highest level of care available in the pre-hospital setting," Ada County Paramedics Director Darby Weston said. "We have developed a model of collaboration which will allow us to efficiently utilize public resources in delivering that service."

"One deployment model that looks at the entire county beyond political boundaries makes sense," said Boise Fire Chief Dennis Doan. "We can work together to make sure we get the best care to patients quickly within a system that's coordinated, efficient and makes the most of every tax dollar."

How did this agreement come to be? The Joint Powers EMS agreement being signed today is the result of 25 years of discussions. However, three years ago, the fire chiefs and EMS directors in Ada County began meeting with a renewed commitment to work together to design a system to best deliver emergency medical services to citizens in a way that maximized tax dollars, minimized duplication and ensured a consistent and high quality service.

"It took many discussions - and even some disagreements - to get here. Throughout the process, though, it has been clear we all agree that patient care and fiscal responsibility should be our top priorities," said Eagle Fire Chief Mike Winkle. "People in need of emergency medical care and taxpayers who support our agencies will be better served by this county-wide, collaborative system."

Who is part of the Agreement? Ada County, the Ada County Emergency Medical Services District, the City of Boise, the City of Meridian, the Eagle and Kuna fire districts and North Ada County Fire and Rescue District are all signatories to the new agreement.

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