

Beyond Lights and Sirens: National Emergency Medical Services Week

Division of EMS Executive Director Jeffrey Leaming

As executive director of the Ohio Department of Public Safety's Division of Emergency Medical Services and a 30- year veteran in the Ohio fire service, I recognize the dedicated efforts of the first responder community to serve the citizens of Ohioans and its visitors.

Few appreciate the importance of EMS service in their community until an emergency calls upon firefighters and EMTs to respond to a life-threatening situation. It is only then that many truly value the skills and training of these professionals and understand their relevant role within one's neighborhood.

An estimated 240 million calls are made to 9-1-1 in the U.S. each year. There are approximately 1 million emergency runs for EMS in the state each year.

Nationwide, EMS teams are ready to provide critical, lifesaving care to those in need 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with many of our first responders being volunteers.

Every day, here in Ohio, there are outstanding accounts of first responders fearlessly entering emergency situations, quickly assessing and deciding what needs to be done to save a mother, a father, or a child.

Many consider them the gatekeepers into the healthcare system and sometimes the source of primary care for some of our citizens. It's great to know that we are being served by a group who our dedicated to providing the highest level of care.

Currently, Ohio has the commitment and dedication of 40,000 EMTs and more than 50,000 firefighters in Ohio who provide a fundamental community service every day.

National Emergency Medical Services Week (May 20-26) brings together local communities and medical personnel to promote safety and honor the dedication of those who provide the day-to-day lifesaving services of medicine's "front line."

The theme *EMS More Than A Job. A Calling.* exemplifies the commitment that emergency medical personnel make on behalf of the communities they serve.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey Leaming". The signature is stylized and fluid, written in a cursive-like script.