



# LAKELAND FIRE DEPARTMENT

May 23, 2014

## In Brief: Lakeland Fire Department Now Offering Advanced Life Support on All Units

The Lakeland Fire Department (LFD) is pleased to announce that as of May 22, 2014 every frontline fire engine and rescue truck in its service area is now a fully equipped Advanced Life Support (ALS) unit. This effort spearheaded and accomplished by the department's Rescue Division means the people of Lakeland will receive the highest level of available emergency medical care.

The journey to convert the Lakeland Fire Department from Basic Life Support (BLS) to ALS services began in 2003 with select units in the department's busiest areas becoming ALS units. As of 2:00 PM May 22, 2014, the transition to a completely ALS medical-rescue service was complete with the conversion of Engines 21, 41, and 61.

The difference between BLS and ALS care is significant. ALS care administered by LFD's highly trained paramedics will allow advanced emergency and trauma care in the field, including but certainly not limited to treatment like advanced cardiac life support, treatment with pharmaceuticals, and advanced airway therapy. This advanced care is the highest quality pre-hospital treatment available for patients, whereas with Basic Life Support care only minimal care such as CPR, defibrillation, bandaging, and oxygen administration can be provided.

"The heart of the fire service is to serve people in their most vulnerable moments. Throughout the years the fire service has evolved to meet the needs of society which included emergency medical care. Our recent accomplishment has provided the citizens and visitors of Lakeland with the highest level of pre-hospital emergency medical care available to date." said Rescue Chief Shane Reynolds who was instrumental in coordinating and completing the ALS transition.

Another item of distinction in LFD's record of exceptional emergency medical care is the fact that of its 141 emergency response personnel, 63 are paramedics with more anticipated to be certified in the coming year.

Gary Ballard, Fire Chief

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