

Virginia's EMS system leads nation

Coalfield Progress

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How much do you know about Virginia's Emergency Medical Services, or EMS, system?

Thousands of calls are received by 911 dispatchers every y and Virginia's EMS providers are always waiting, ready to respond. Gov. Tim Kaine recently signed a proclamation recognizing the importance of EMS within the Commonwealth and expressing appreciation to those who dedicate their lives to serving others. The first independent volunteer EMS rescue squad in the nation was established in Roanoke in 1928.

Today, the Virginia Emergency Medical Services (EMS) System is one of the largest in the country with more than 700 EMS agencies and over 33,000 certified EMS providers. The Virginia Beach Department of Emergency Medical Services is the largest volunteer rescue service in the country. Charlottesville-Albemarle is the busiest all-volunteer rescue squad in the country.

EMS agencies in Virginia respond to more than 700,000 911 calls yearly, with the majority of those calls coming in on Saturdays.

Difficulty breathing is the most common symptom that people call 911 for in Virginia, followed by chest pain, mostly in people ages 45-54.

The Virginia Poison Control Network is an essential part of the Virginia EMS System, and in 2005 they handled over 68,000 calls about human exposure to poison.