

National Emergency Medical Services Week May 20-26



**Winner of 7 State of Oregon
Awards for Outstanding
Service and Excellence.**

Salute to



The Future of Western Lane Ambulance District

The board of directors of Western Lane Ambulance District considers our District to have one of the finest emergency medical response teams anywhere. We intend to keep it that way as we continue to strive to deliver our high standard of care in a timely manner to the people of our district.

Our District faces several challenges as our call volume continues to increase while our population both grows and ages. Last year we exceeded 3,200 calls, a volume that was more than twice the call volume we had in the late 1990's. At the same time we face ever declining reimbursements from insurance, Medicare and Medicaid. This coupled with our low tax base makes it very important that we work to get the most from the resources we have.

We must continue to operate efficiently and effectively. One way we do this is by hiring and retaining quality employees, those that know their jobs, and know the area. Another option we are exploring is to look for ways to work with other agencies to better utilize the combined resources the taxpayers have provided. To that end, in 2016 the Ambulance District began a partnership with Siuslaw Valley Fire and Rescue

where, though contract, or Intergovernmental Agreement, we have combined the administrative oversight of both. While this appears to be providing some initial cost savings to both districts, the long term benefits to the community, including improved efficiency, coordination and communication may well exceed our expectations.

Regardless of the challenges we face, it is the mission of Western Lane Ambulance District to continue to "provide professional emergency services, transport, and community education with the highest standards of excellence"

Sincerely,
Mike Webb, Board President
Western Lane Ambulance District



Thank you for the opportunity to serve.



Western Lane Ambulance District provides emergency Advanced Life Support response and transport to approximately 17,500 people who reside in a geographic area of over 980 square miles. Our team of professionals includes full-time and part-time personnel that respond to an average of 3,200 calls per year. We are owned and

operated by the people we serve. Many of our employees live in our community. They are your friends, neighbors – even family members – that are committed to saving lives and serving you.

These are your tax dollars we use to provide emergency service – and we take that responsibility seriously. Board members are elected by and from the community to make spending decisions, and all their meetings are open to the public. We operate under a balanced budget and have passed all of our independent financial and accountability audits. We regularly look for ways to stretch local tax dollars further by applying for grants, paying cash for apparatus and equipment, and partnering with other agencies.

The cost to provide emergency services will continue to increase as our population grows and ages. Partnering with other agencies enhances the type of emergency services we are able to provide. That's why our fire and ambulance districts signed an agreement to share costs for administrative services. With these savings, our district has been able to set aside money to replace ambulances and hire one additional paramedic. We also partner with other Fire Districts to ensure they have the emergency medical training and equipment to provide rapid first response before our paramedics can arrive. In 2018 we partnered with Peace Health to start Lane County's first Mobile Integrated Health Paramedic program with the goal of reducing the number readmissions to the hospital. We will continue exploring ways to save money, increase efficiencies, and improve service by partnering with other agencies.

Our ambulance district has seen EMS call volumes rise 12-15% every year for the past three years. It requires additional personnel and replacement ambulances sooner to meet this growing demand for service. These are just some of the challenges we have outlined in our strategic plan. We recognize that we have a responsibility to prepare for the future to ensure we can meet the needs of our community today and well into the future.

A note from the Operations Manager

"To provide quick, efficient, professional emergency medical services, transport, and community education with the highest standards of excellence." This has been Western Lane Ambulance District Mission statement for the past 4 decades, realizing that we will never be perfect, it is the pursuit of perfection that drives our organization to excellence.

I'd like to take the opportunity to update the citizens of our District how we strive for that excellence. Currently, we have 15 full time Medics to provide care, of those 15 employees, 10 are critically care trained to give an even higher level of care versus the standard certified Medics. Critical Care Paramedics are trained in Hemodynamic Monitoring, Ventilator management, expanded IV medication infusions, as well as more education on human pathophysiology. The dedication and training that goes into this is an immense undertaking. The employees demonstrate this dedication daily, they truly want the best for their patients and work hard behind the scenes to pursue that perfection.

To further our patient care, the district has always strived to have the best medical equipment and ambulances available. We have been fortunate enough to add two new ambulances, one as a primary unit and one for hospital transfers. To this date, our fleet consists of 2 transfer ambulances, 3 fully equipped first out ambulances, and a Rescue vehicle for sand dune patient extractions.

Our Public Education programs were very active over the past year in educating the community. Working with PeaceHealth and LifeFlight Network, we implemented a Stroke Prevention Public Service Announcement

and visited several community groups educating to Stroke Prevention. We continue to offer monthly CPR classes, this year we added American Heart Association CPR so that we can offer a wider range of classes to the community. We also provided child restraint safety devices to community members and educated on how to ensure they are properly placed in vehicles. Continuing forward, Public Education is a priority for a healthier community.

Lastly, an update on the Mobile Integrate Health Program (Community Paramedic). In conjunction with PeaceHealth, we began this program in January. The Mobile Integrated Healthcare employee has been very active in treating patients that have been recognized for potential risk of 30-day readmissions, high Emergency Department utilizer patients, or high EMS utilizer patients. The MIH program has also been very successful bridging healthcare gaps and needs in Palliative care and Home Health Care. The program has been very successful bridging gaps in the local healthcare system.

Sincerely,
Matt House
Western Lane Ambulance District
Operations Manager



Letter from Matt Danigelis, MD

I have been an emergency physician in Florence since 2003 and the medical director of the Western Lane Ambulance District since 2008. Working in these roles, I have had numerous opportunities to observe the EMTs and paramedics. These providers consistently demonstrate competence, efficiency, and a caring, empathetic approach to patient care.

I have witnessed the dedication of the ambulance crew, whether in maintaining quality assurance/quality improvement measures, community education, or in pursuing a higher level of training. Florence has a large retirement community and, as such, its residents often have a medical complexity that is not suggested by the small size of the town. Many of the patients served by the district are critically ill and will eventually require transfer to a facility with more specialty services. Several of the paramedics at WLAD have become critical care certified. This certification

requires intensive training in the evaluation and treatment of the most seriously ill patients. Having paramedics with these skills has been invaluable in best serving the needs of the district. The district has also recently initiated a mobile integrated healthcare program, informally known as a "community paramedic." This new position has greatly improved the care of patients in our community who may not require an ambulance or hospitalization but often have limitations regarding their ability to access medical care for non-emergent conditions.

Western Lane Ambulance District has a knowledgeable, committed, and compassionate group of EMTs and paramedics. It is my honor and privilege to serve as the medical director of an ambulance district that is committed to best serving the challenging and changing needs of the community.

Sincerely,
Matt Danigelis, MD

