

May 2, 2011 / For Immediate Release

## **Airdrie Fire Department to Provide Medical Co-Response**

AIRDRIE, AB – As of May 1, 2011 the Airdrie Fire Department is providing medical co-response for critical medical emergencies in the City of Airdrie.

Medical co-response means that Airdrie’s 52 firefighters, who are currently fully trained and registered EMT/Paramedics, will begin medical care when they are the first to arrive on-scene. Firefighters also assist EMS crews to expedite treatment and get patients to the hospital faster.

Of 2500 medical calls in Airdrie each year, over 700 will meet the criteria that require a co-response from the Airdrie Fire Department.

“The safety of our citizens is paramount,” says Mayor Peter Brown, “City Council believes in utilizing the existing skill set and training of our firefighters in providing this increased level of service to our citizens.”

“Airdrie Fire Department’s priority is fire response, however, we are equipped and trained to co-respond on critical medical emergencies and will work closely with Alberta Health Services EMS to ensure a coordinated approach to emergency care,” says Assistant Chief Linda Masson.

### **Background**

In 2010 Alberta Health Services assumed responsibility for the operation of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in the City of Airdrie. Airdrie Fire Department became a standalone fire department and was no longer dispatched to medical calls.

The majority of Alberta cities and municipalities currently provide some type of medical co-response program.

The American Heart Association, through extensive research, has definitively established that medical co-response by fire departments provides a critical link in the chain of survival that gives patients the best outcomes.

-30-

Linda Masson  
City of Airdrie  
(403) 948-8882  
Linda.masson@airdrie.ca