

## **Independence Fire District earns national recognition for efforts to improve STEMI treatment**

The Independence Fire District has received the American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline® EMS **GOLD ACHIEVEMENT AWARD** for implementing specific quality improvement measures to treat patients who suffer severe heart attacks.

Each year, more than 250,000 people experience an ST elevation myocardial infarction (STEMI), the deadliest type of heart attack, caused by a blockage of blood flow to the heart that requires timely treatment. To prevent death, it is critical to restore blood flow as quickly as possible, either by mechanically opening the blocked vessel or by providing clot-busting medication.

The American Heart Association's Mission: Lifeline program helps reduce barriers to prompt treatment for heart attacks – starting from when 9-1-1 is called, to EMS transport and continuing through hospital treatment and discharge. Optimal care for heart attack patients takes coordination between the individual hospital, EMS and healthcare system.

“EMTs and paramedics play a vital part in the system of care for those who have heart attacks,” said Tim Henry, M.D., Chair of the Mission: Lifeline Acute Coronary Syndrome Subcommittee. “Since they often are the first medical point of contact, they can save precious minutes of treatment time by activating the emergency response system that alerts hospitals to an incoming heart attack patient.”

Program participants apply for the award recognition by demonstrating how their organization has committed to improving quality care for STEMI patients.

“The Independence Fire District is honored to be recognized by the American Heart Association for our dedication to providing optimal care for heart attack patients,” said Assistant Chief Phil Dietz. “The Mission: Lifeline program puts proven knowledge and guidelines to work on a daily basis so patients have the best possible chance of survival.”