



**FORSYTHCOUNTY**  
Department of Communications  
Release 000845  
June 26, 2015

Contact: Jodi B. Gardner  
Director of Communications  
770.886.2802  
JBGardner@forsythco.com

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**FORSYTH COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN  
2015 INTERNATIONAL FIRE/EMS SAFETY AND HEALTH WEEK**

*Firefighter safety and health is focus of initiative*

**FORSYTHCOUNTY, Georgia** – The Forsyth County Fire Department will participate in the 2015 International Fire/EMS Safety and Health Week July 5-11. Safety and Health Week is a joint initiative of the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) and the National Volunteer Fire Council (NVFC). The event is coordinated by the IAFC Safety, Health and Survival Section and the NVFC, and is supported by a network of fire service, health, and safety organizations.

This annual event aims to improve firefighter safety and health to give all a better chance of survival during emergencies and in the long-term. Fire departments across the world will take time during the week to increase awareness and action so that safety and health become a priority in all fire departments.

“The Forsyth County Fire Department is looking forward to participating in Safety and Health Week once again this year,” Division Chief Jason Shivers said. “Throughout Safety Week, all Forsyth County firefighters will be training on the objectives outlined as a part of this initiative. It is important to note, however, that our daily response will in no way be impacted. Responding to the citizens’ request for assistance is always our top priority.”

The theme for Safety and Health Week this year is “Creating a Culture of Safety.” This theme focuses on what can be done to improve safety in three specific areas to create an overall culture of safety for the fire and emergency services:

- In the community, by promoting fire prevention and risk reduction strategies to  
-more-

**FORSYTHCOUNTY** Department of Communications  
110 E. Main Street, Suite 210 | Cumming, Georgia 30040 | [www.forsythco.com](http://www.forsythco.com)  
TV Forsyth - Comcast Channel 23 and AT&T Channel 99

- prevent fires and other emergencies.
- In the department, by strengthening standard operating procedures that re-enforce safety and creating department health and wellness programs.
- For the individual, by encouraging firefighters and EMS providers to take personal responsibility for their safety and health.

Forsyth County depends on the Forsyth County Fire Department to provide critical, life-saving services and be ready to respond to all types of emergencies and disasters. The department is made up of 172 personnel that protect the approximately 204,000 citizens over an area of 247 square miles.

With heart attacks being the leading cause of on-duty firefighter fatalities, the growing risk of job related cancers, and 81,000 firefighters being injured each year across the nation, it is especially important that each responder is prepared in every way when the call comes in. In 2013, 97 American firefighters were lost in the line of duty.

Safety and Health Week provides a time for all department members to focus on the safety and health measures they need to take both on and off duty to make sure they stay strong and ready to serve the community at a moment's notice. The event brings together the entire fire service community to help prevent line-of-duty deaths and injuries.

“Line-of-duty deaths are the most horrible event a fire department can experience,” said Shivers. “Sadly, the Forsyth County Fire Department has suffered three such losses in our history. We are committed to reducing the risk of such losses as much as possible by way of our hiring practices, training guidelines and physical fitness efforts. The fire service is a dangerous profession but we want to afford our troops every opportunity to complete a full career injury-free and enjoy a long retirement afterward.”

The Forsyth County Fire Department asks for community awareness and support during International Fire/EMS Safety and Health Week and in its safety and health initiatives throughout the year.

###