



News Release

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Contacts: Melanie Rose, Spokane Valley Fire Department (509) 496-3344
Michele Anderson, Spokane Fire Department (509) 742-0063

Off-Duty Professional Firefighters Partner with National Pilot Program to Save Lives

Spokane, Wash – Spokane County is the third of four sites in the United States selected for a pilot program to utilize off-duty professional firefighters in response to cardiac arrest calls in public and private settings.

The *PulsePoint Verified Responder Pilot Program* is being launched in Spokane through a partnership of the PulsePoint Foundation, Spokane Fire Department, Spokane Valley Fire Department, International Association of Firefighters Locals 29, 876 and 3701, and automated external defibrillator (AED) manufacturer Philips. The first two pilot sites for the Verified Responder program were implemented earlier this year in Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue (Oregon) and the City of Sioux Falls (South Dakota). A fourth site in Madison (WI) is set to come online in the coming weeks.

More than 350,000 Americans each year have an out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest (SCA) where the heart suddenly and unexpectedly stops beating; nearly 90 percent are fatal. If treated early with CPR and in some cases defibrillation, the chances of survival can double or even triple.

In February 2014, *PulsePoint* was launched in the Spokane region to improve cardiac arrest survival rates by notifying CPR-trained citizen volunteers when someone is experiencing a cardiac emergency in a nearby public location. *PulsePoint* is a smart phone app designed to support public safety agencies in improving cardiac arrest survival rates. The app is now in more than 2500 communities in 35 states with more than 1,000,000 users.

“Since we launched *PulsePoint* here locally, we’ve grown to more than 22,000 users and hundreds of ‘CPR-needed’ activations with citizen responders,” explained Bryan Collins, Spokane Valley Fire Department Chief. “With *Verified Responder*, we now have the opportunity to send off-duty professional firefighters into a home or private location in response to a cardiac emergency, which will dramatically broaden our impact to save lives.”

The *Verified Responder* Pilot Program utilizes the *PulsePoint* app. In addition, Philips is providing an AED to every participating firefighter so that if they respond, they can employ the same technology that is used by emergency medical responders and physicians to restart a heart that has stopped beating. Participating professional firefighters are certified emergency medical technicians (EMTs) or paramedics who receive background checks as part of employment.

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The effort will gather important data from the Spokane area pilot program and combine it with existing technology and clinical insights to inform future lifesaving strategies and products. During the pilot, King County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) in Seattle will be assisting with programmatic evaluation for potential expansion to additional communities. The pilot program runs through December 2018.

“We were proud to help introduce PulsePoint to the Spokane region three years ago,” said Brian Schaeffer, Spokane Fire Department Chief, “and we are honored to be the third site in the country selected for the Verified Responder program. We know that nearly 74 percent of cardiac incidents in Spokane County occur in a private home or location. Our off-duty first responders are dedicated to improving survival rates in our community when sudden cardiac arrest strikes in a private or public location.”

About the PulsePoint Foundation

PulsePoint is a 501(c)3 non-profit foundation based in the San Francisco Bay Area. Through the use of location-aware mobile devices, PulsePoint is building applications that work with local public safety agencies to improve communications with citizens, empowering them to help reduce the millions of annual deaths from sudden cardiac arrest. Deployment of the PulsePoint app can significantly strengthen the “chain of survival” by improving bystander response to cardiac arrest victims and increasing the chance that lifesaving steps will be taken prior to the arrival of emergency medical services (EMS). Learn more at www.pulsepoint.org. The free app is available for download on iTunes and Google Play.

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