

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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SEARHC EMS to offer Wilderness First Responder course

SITKA, April 7, 2008 — The SouthEast Alaska Regional Health Consortium (SEARHC) Emergency Medical Services department is offering a Wilderness First Responder course that takes place May 12-19 at the SEARHC Community Health Services building first-floor conference room in Sitka.

The Wilderness First Responder (WFR) course includes a national certification through Wilderness Medical Associates (WMA) that lasts for three years. The courses are useful for anybody who spends a great deal of time in the Alaska outdoors. Some emergency medical services units, guide services and search and rescue squads require the Wilderness First Responder course for employees or volunteers, and some organizations have been known to pick up all or part of the tuition for their students.

The WFR course takes place over 72 hours on eight days. Class times are from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day with an hour for lunch. No prior experience is required for the class, which also provides three-year WMA certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and automated external defibrillator (AED) use. Also available is a State of Alaska Emergency Trauma Technician (ETT) certification, which is required for many ambulance, fire department and similar emergency services jobs around the state.

The WFR course costs \$375, which includes all books and materials. Checks should be made out to SEARHC EMS. There is a limit of 18 students in the class, and students must be at least 18 years old to receive WMA certification. The registration deadline is 4 p.m. on Wednesday, May 7, and classes are open to all Southeast Alaska adult residents. Students should bring clothing suitable for wearing while working outside, but medical equipment will be supplied.

“Bring what you’d normally wear in the wilderness,” said SEARHC EMS Coordinator Mike Motti, who said that part of the course will be taught outdoors. “The emphasis is on hands-on learning, both in the classroom and outside.”

For more information on the class, please contact Mike Motti at 1-907-966-8771 or mike.motti@searhc.org, or contact SEARHC EMS/WFR Instructor Eric Van Cise at 1-907-966-966-8769 or eric.cise@searhc.org. For a more detailed course description and information about the WFR certification process, go to the WMA Web site at <http://www.wildmed.com>.

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