

TIMES-CALL

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LONGMONT, COLORADO

AirLife to be based in Carbon Valley

By Rachel Carter
Longmont Times-Call

LONGMONT — AirLife Denver will add a third helicopter to its emergency air fleet, and it will be based in Frederick.

AirLife officials announced Tuesday that the third helicopter and its crew will be stationed at the Frederick-Firestone Fire Protection District fire station No. 2 in Frederick.

Growing population and demand along the northern Front Range spurred AirLife's decision, spokeswoman Leslie Horna said.

"It's a definite needed service," she said. "A lot of the communities are spread farther apart than in the Denver metro area, so it takes longer to get care for those patients."

Having a helicopter and crew stationed in Frederick will not only help the fire district, but also the entire region, Fire Chief Ted Poszywak said.

"Especially with the projected growth that's going to happen here, I think it's a very proactive approach," he said. "It really enhances access to care for all patients."

The helicopter is on rush order, and officials hope to have it based in Frederick by early February, Horna said.

AirLife wanted to expand into Northern Colorado because it —

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and other emergency flight companies — receive a number of calls there to which they can't respond, Horna said.

"This was a strategic decision," she said. "We think the addition of this third helicopter will help."

The company's new helicopter will provide service in Boulder, Weld, Morgan and Larimer counties and southern Wyoming.

AirLife officials chose Frederick because that is the area where "we had the biggest spike in calls that we're not able to meet," Horna said.

Officials first approached Poszywak in August, he said, while they were considering several sites in Northern Col-

orado. The decision to base the helicopter and crew in Frederick became final earlier this month, he said.

The fire district already was planning some renovations at Fire Station No. 2, Poszywak said. AirLife will piggyback on those plans and will lease space for its operations and crew. AirLife also will build a heliport at the station, he said.

AirLife Denver is the emergency medical and critical care transport service of the HealthONE system of hospitals. The service provides air and ground transport for patients with critical medical needs and traumatic injuries.

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