



[Save This Story](#) | [E-mail This Story](#) | [Print This Story](#) | [Large Type](#)

Yesterday at 10:23 PM

## '3 million miles of quality service'

### Delta Ambulance named Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce's 2012 Business of the Year

By Matt Hongoltz-Hetling [mhhetling@mainetoday.com](mailto:mhhetling@mainetoday.com)  
MaineToday Media

WATERVILLE — Delta Ambulance administrators have long regarded the company as invisible to the public in central Maine.

"For 39 years, in spite of our best efforts, Delta was central Maine's best kept secret, or so it seemed," spokesman Bill McKenna said.

That may end, now that the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce named Delta its 2012 Business of the Year.

The word began to get out, he said, just last year, when the not-for-profit organization moved from the lower level of MaineGeneral Medical Center's Seton campus to its own newly built facility.

Before, he said, "folks presumed we were a department of the hospital"; but after the move, "we began to stand out more. People asked questions and began to understand more of who we are and what we do."

Kim Lindlof, chamber president and chief executive officer, said Delta has been a valuable asset to the region for years.

She said the award recognizes its "continued commitment to our region by investing in a new state-of-the-art building, its strong support for local businesses since it used a local contractor, and good stewards of the environment through its incorporation of geothermal in its new building design."

The new building was built by Sheridan Corp. of Fairfield.

Delta Executive Director Tim Beals said the new building, which opened in January 2012, became possible when MaineGeneral gave the company 15 acres on Waterville's Chase Avenue.

Delta has come a long way, both figuratively and literally, since 1972, when 10 employees served five communities from leased space in the Seton basement.

In the years since then, Delta ambulances have traveled about 3.7 million miles, enough to go to the moon and back more than seven times.

Along the way, the staff has provided care to 330,690 people, roughly one person for every four living in Maine.

In 2012, Delta's 120 employees, including 52 full-timers, provided service to more than 16,000 people in 17 communities spread among five counties from bases in Augusta and Waterville.

The number of ambulances has grown, too, from two in 1972 to 17 today.

Beals said Delta's quality improvement program allows staff teams to compile local data on events such as cardiac arrest, or calls in which the patient needed no transportation. The data, he said, allow the company to identify trends in needs that the company can respond to.

During the past 13 years, the company has received a handful of awards from organizations including the Margaret Chase Smith Center, the Waterville Board of Education, the Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

In 2011, Delta also was recognized for safety by the Maine Employers Mutual Insurance Co. for reaching a million hours without a single injury resulting in lost work time.

The company also is active with many area charitable organizations, such as Rotary clubs, chambers of commerce and the Maine Lung Association.

This year, the Maine Lung Association's Trek Across Maine cyclist fundraiser will be escorted by Delta Ambulances for the 15th consecutive year.

Beals said the company also contributes to the local economy, both as an employer and by "preferring to buy local whenever possible."

Delta and the broader ambulance industry are working to meet several emerging challenges caused by ever-shifting regulations and patient needs.

"Reimbursements are always a concern," Beals said. The federal Affordable Health Care Act ties future reimbursements to patient outcomes, he said, which has caused Delta to seek a partnership with an accountable care organization.

Regulations also have caused increasing educational demands on the staff, he said. When Delta began in 1972, emergency workers needed only 16 hours of training; but today, ongoing education for certified personnel means the training never ends.

Part of this, he said, is a result of the rapid advancement of technology, meaning that the health care industry is constantly struggling to find and make best use of the most advanced equipment.

For example, he said, ambulance crews now have the capability to perform ultrasound tests, a procedure that has traditionally been offered only at hospitals. It is also now possible to establish a video link between an ambulance crew and emergency room doctors.

Beals said the recognition means a lot to the employees who made it happen.

"It is fantastic that the employees, who really are the company, can be recognized for their effort in striving to always be the best," he said.

McKenna credited the company's leadership for providing a steady hand throughout the industry's constantly evolving landscape.

"The company has always been responsibly governed by an engaged board of directors and maintained through good times as well as not-so-good time," McKenna said.

Matt Hongoltz-Hetling — 861-9287  
[mhhetling@centralmaine.com](mailto:mhhetling@centralmaine.com)

Were you interviewed for this story? If so, please fill out our [accuracy form](#)

[Send question/comment to the editors](#)

[Like](#) [Tweet](#)



Delta Ambulance Director Tim Beals beside ambulances at the new Waterville headquarters. The company has earned the 2012 Business of the Year award from the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce.

Staff photo by David Leaming

Select images available for purchase in the [Maine Today Photo Store](#)

### Further Discussion

Here at [OnlineSentinel.com](#) we value our readers and are committed to growing our community by encouraging you to add to the discussion. To ensure we value our readers and are committed to growing our community by encouraging you to add to the discussion. To ensure we value our readers and are committed to growing our community by encouraging you to add to the discussion, we have implemented a strict no-bullying policy. To participate, you must follow our [Terms of Use](#).

**Questions about the article?** Add them below and we'll try to answer them or do a follow-up post as soon as we can.  
**Technical problems?** [Email them](#) to us with an exact description of the problem. Make sure to include:  
- Type of computer or mobile device you are using  
- Exact operating system and browser you are viewing the site on (**TIP:** You can easily determine your operating system [here](#).)