



**MAIN OFFICE**  
1250 Hollipark Drive  
Idaho Falls, ID 83401  
Phone: (208) 522-0310  
Fax: (208) 525-7063  
[www.phd7.idaho.gov](http://www.phd7.idaho.gov)

## **NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
September 27, 2012

Contact: Geri Rackow, PIO  
Office: (208) 533-3155  
Cell: (208) 705-4615

### **EASTERN IDAHO PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT TO OBSERVE FALLS PREVENTION AWARENESS WEEK, SEPTEMBER 24-28, 2012**

(Southeast IDAHO) – Idaho’s seven local public health districts join 44 other states and the National Falls Free<sup>©</sup> Coalition in declaring **Falls Prevention Awareness** Week. This week of awareness seeks to unite professionals, older adults, caregivers, and family members to play a part in raising awareness and preventing falls in the older adult population.

“More than 5,500 fall-related calls to EMS in Idaho were for adults 65 and older, and more than 150 adults in that age group died from a fall in 2010,” said Timalee Geisler, Health Education Specialist. “Falls among older adults can negatively affect their health and sense of security and impact the entire family. We need to stand together as a community and raise awareness of preventive measures that can keep seniors safe in Idaho.”

Every 15 seconds, an older adult is seen in an emergency department for a fall-related injury. Nationally, falls are the leading cause of both fatal and nonfatal injuries for those aged 65 and over. Moreover, the chances of falling and being seriously injured in a fall increase with age.

“This week of awareness brings attention to a growing public health issue among older adults, but more importantly, the growing availability of proven falls prevention programs and interventions,” said (Bonita) Lynn Beattie, vice president of Injury Prevention with the National Council on Aging (NCOA), and leader of the Falls Free<sup>©</sup> Initiative. “We need to create a national prevention dialogue, and we welcome everyone to stand together to promote older adult safety and independence.”

Studies show that a combination of interventions can significantly reduce falls in the older adult population. Experts recommend a physical activity regimen with balance, strength training, and flexibility components, such as one of the more than 70 Fit and Fall Proof<sup>™</sup> classes offered in Idaho; consulting with a health professional about getting a fall risk assessment; having medications reviewed periodically; getting eyes checked annually; and making sure the home environment is safe and supportive.

**In Rexburg and the surrounding areas, seniors are invited to come to the Rexburg Farmer’s Market on Friday, September 28 from 4-6 p.m. for information related to falls prevention and the Fit and Fall Proof Program.**

For a complete list of Fit and Fall Proof<sup>™</sup> classes and more tips on preventing falls, visit the Eastern Idaho Public Health District website at [www.phd7.idaho.gov](http://www.phd7.idaho.gov) or call Timalee Geisler at 533-3149.

###