



Why have an AED

An automated external defibrillator (AED) is used for a person in cardiac arrest to shock the heart and allow the heart to start beating effectively again. These devices are about the size of a laptop computer and having one available within minutes of a person collapsing can mean the difference between life and death for them. For every minute that goes by without giving a person the defibrillation shock they need, their chance of survival can go down by 10%; so that at 10 minutes of down time that person has a very slim chance of survival. AEDs are easy to use; just turn them on and follow the voice prompts given, and they cannot shock someone who does not need it, making them very safe to use by anyone. An AED can range in cost from \$1100 to \$2000, and there may even be a grant available to help with the purchase.

So if AEDs are so effective, easy to use, and affordable, why don't more businesses have AEDs? With cost as less of an issue than it used to be, businesses typically cite two reasons why they don't have an AED on hand: the first is a lack of training, and the second is liability. Some companies are afraid of being perceived as "lifesaving experts," and then sued if they fail. Remember, we all have fire extinguishers in our businesses, but that does not make us all firefighters. In fact, in Minnesota we have a Good Samaritan Law (604A.01) that not only protects a person who renders emergency care or assistance but also specifically mentions the use of an AED stating "emergency care includes care given by or use of an automated external defibrillator." Training in CPR and AED use is also much easier than in the past. Hands Only CPR allows us to quickly and effectively train someone in these skills in as little as 30 minutes. This type of training can be done through a variety of methods, from community groups and local EMS agencies offering training to an at home self-teaching version that you can watch in your living room. This shortened class not only makes use of a businesses' schedule better but these classes are often free or at a much reduced cost. This saves companies money and allows them to offer the training to more of their staff.

With this additional information we hope that you consider having an AED at your site and training your staff in CPR and AED use, so that everyone can be ready to save a life.

Please contact Allina Health Heart Safe Communities or the Minnesota Resuscitation Consortium with any additional questions.

Thank You

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