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## Charleston Police Department Receives Defibrillators

The Charleston Police Department received two automated external defibrillators (AED) from the Arkansas Department of Health, Office of Emergency Medical Services and Trauma Systems last week. The Franklin County Sheriff's Office, the City of Ozark and the City of Altus will also receive AED's.

The defibrillator being distributed by the department of Health is the Defibtech Lifeline AED provided by LifeSavers, Inc. The defibrillator sets, which include three sets of adult defibrillation pads, and a carrying case, were purchased at a special price of approximately \$1000 each. The defibrillators will be carried in Charleston Police cars.

Each year in the United States, Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) kills over 400,000 people. The only cure for most cases of SCA is immediate shock therapy from an AED by shocking the heart back to a normal rhythm. When a person has a sudden cardiac arrest, the heart becomes arrhythmic. Every minute that the heart is not beating lowers the odds of survival by 7 to 10 percent. Defibrillate within three minutes and the chances of survival are 70 percent. After 10 minutes without defibrillation, very few people survive.

CPR buys a little more time - potentially giving the victim a small amount of extra time until a defibrillator arrives. But SCA ultimately requires a shock to restore a normal heart rhythm. As a result, most CPR training now also includes AED training. All of the Charleston Police officers are trained with the use of AED's

A computer inside the AED analyzes the patient's heart rhythm and determines if a shock is required to save the victim. If a shock is required, the AED uses voice instructions to guide the user through the process. The AED's voice guides the rescuer through the steps involved in saving someone; for example, "apply pads to patient's bare chest" (the pads themselves have pictures of where they should be placed) and "press red shock button." Safeguards have been designed into the unit precisely so that non-medical responders can't use the AED to shock someone who doesn't need a shock.

Studies show that AEDs interpret the victim's heart rhythm more quickly and accurately than many trained emergency professionals. If the AED determines that no shock is needed, it will not allow a shock to be given.

The American Heart Association (AHA) strongly supports having AEDs in public areas such as sports arenas, office complexes, schools, doctors' offices, shopping malls, airports, and other public places. The AHA also advocates that all police and fire and rescue vehicles be equipped with an AED.

An AED can be used by practically anyone who has been shown what to do. In fact, there are cases where people with no training at all have saved lives.



*Saving lives: Craig Moore, Charleston Police Chief, left, and Lane Owen, Interim Director of the Franklin County EMS, show off the two automated external defibrillators (AED) that the City of Charleston recently received from the Arkansas Department of Health.*