

County Installs Automatic Defibrillators



Somerset County Office of Emergency Management Director LeRoy Gunzelman III shows Freeholder Director Peter S. Palmer how an automatic external defibrillator works.

As part of an ongoing effort to update the county medical response plan and protect employees and visitors, Somerset County recently installed automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) in the county complex and other county locations.

An AED is a portable automatic device used to restore normal heart rhythm to patients in cardiac arrest, which is applied outside the body. It automatically analyzes the patient's heart rhythm and advises the rescuer whether or not a shock is needed to restore a normal heart beat.

"We are pleased to have these automatic defibrillators on our premises. In a life-and-death situation, minutes matter," said Freeholder Director Peter S. Palmer. "Hundreds of people visit our offices weekly and having defibrillators accessible for use by emergency personnel is an important safety measure."

AEDs have been placed in locations that are easily accessible by first responders. They are housed in white cabinets with a glass window.

When an AED cabinet is opened, an alarm sounds indicating that the cabinet has been opened and that

a medical emergency may be occurring. It does not automatically notify 911.

Anyone hearing the alarm should call 911 or county communications at 908-526-2500 as AEDs are to be used only by individuals with proper training and certification in accordance with state and local laws.

In the county complex in Somerville, AEDs have been installed at the Court House at 20 N. Bridge St., Administration Building at 20 Grove St., 40 N. Bridge St., Facilities & Services at 80 E. High St., Historic Court House on Main Street, Human Services Building at 27 Warren St., Jail on Grove Street and Jury Assembly Room in the historic church at the corner of Main and Bridge streets.

AEDs have been installed at the Emergency Services Training Academy and South County Public Works Garage in Hillsborough, the North County Public Works Garage in Peapack and the North Plainfield Public Works Garage.

Also, AEDs have been provided to the county Park Commission to supplement ones they already have.