

RISK MANAGEMENT BULLETIN

Issue 46: Automated External Defibrillator

Background

Sudden Cardiac Arrest remains a significant cause of death in America's workplaces. OSHA attributes 13 percent of all workplace fatalities to Sudden Cardiac Arrest, and health experts estimate that more than 400,000 individuals die of Sudden Cardiac Arrest in the United States each year. According to medical experts, the key to survival is timely initiation of a "chain of survival", including CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). Because of recent technological advances a portable lifesaving device, called an "**automated external defibrillator**" or "**AED**" has recently become an important medical tool. Trained non-medical personnel can use these simplified electronic machines to treat a person in cardiac arrest.

Definition of "AED"

The Automated External Defibrillator is a computerized device that can check a person's heart rhythm. It can recognize a rhythm that requires a shock and it can advise a rescuer when a shock is needed. The AED uses voice prompts, lights, and text messages to tell the rescuer the steps to take. If used properly, the AED is an effective tool when faced with sudden cardiac arrest in the workplace.

Use of an AED

Anyone can use an AED in the event of an emergency. However, it is strongly recommended that they be used by individuals trained in CPR and AED use. Use of the AED by an individual trained in CPR greatly increases the effectiveness of the resuscitation attempt.

Liability Concerns

SDCL 20-9-4.4 provides civil immunity for emergency use or nonuse of AED by a lay person.

Placing an AED in an Office Building or Other Facility

Many state agencies are placing or are considering placing AEDs in their office buildings or other state-managed facilities. There is no magical number of occupants or visitors or any other special conditions that would dictate when an AED is recommended. Each agency is responsible for determining the need for the placement of an AED in an office building or other state facility under their management. They are also responsible for the purchase of the AEDs. When multiple agencies occupy the same facility, they should coordinate their AED placement activities. AEDs should be strategically placed where they can be retrieved and taken to the location of the emergency in no more than three to five minutes.

Training

Prior to the purchase and placement of an AED, the authorizing agency should develop an AED response program within their building or facility. The program would include appropriate CPR and AED training of the response team personnel. CPR and AED training is offered by the SD Bureau of Human Resources.

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Maintenance

AEDs must be adequately maintained to ensure that they will function properly in the event of an emergency. Maintenance is simple and must be done according to the operation and maintenance guidelines provided by the manufacturer. At a minimum, this will include checking for readiness after each use and at least once every 30 days. Records of the periodic checks should be maintained.

A supply kit shall be maintained at the facility and be readily available for use with the AED. The kit should contain:

- ✓ Back-up battery set
- ✓ Extra set of pads
- ✓ Safety razor for shaving chest hair when necessary to apply the pads
- ✓ Cardiovascular pulmonary resuscitation barrier (face shield or mask) for protection from infectious disease
- ✓ Two pairs of unused medical examination gloves

Purchasing an AED

State agencies wishing to purchase an AED can do so through the South Dakota Office of Procurement Management. (605)773-3405.

If you have any questions or would like additional information on AEDs, please contact the Office of Risk Management. (605) 773-5879

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