

# Constant compression: Alton Fire Department demonstrates new CPR machine

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**ALTON** - Citizens of Alton may now breathe easier, because their odds of surviving cardiac arrest just increased significantly.

Thanks to a fundraising drive hosted by the **Alton Fire Department**, which culminated in a generous check for more than \$8,000 from **OSF St. Anthony's Health Center**, a new CPR machine will provide people going through cardiac arrest with constant compressions. Those compressions will ensure there is no interruption to CPR during transport of the patient.

The **Lucas 2 CPR machine** was demonstrated in the emergency department of OSF St. Anthony's Health Center by the Alton Fire Department Tuesday afternoon. After that demonstration, the device went into full service at the department. **Alton Fire Chief Bernie Sebold** said his firefighters have been trained on the machine. The demonstration was done for staff at OSF St. Anthony's as well as members of the media and **Alton Mayor Brant Walker**.

"This device will save lives in Alton," Walker said. "We don't have to worry about the guys getting tired in the ambulance."

**OSF St. Anthony's Emergency Department Medical Director Dr. Rodger Hanko** said the device will increase adequate coronary and brain perfusion during CPR. He said he saw the device used in Nashville, Tennessee, after two 19-year-old men were electrocuted after attempted to shoot a raccoon from an electrical wire with a metal pole.

"The paramedics were overwhelmed at the scene," Hanko said. "The device gave the young men a chance at survival, but unfortunately survival did not occur in that situation."

That chance of survival comes from the fully-automated nature of the machine, Sebold said.

"Once the machine is on, human intervention is out of the picture," he said.

During the demonstration, Sebold said the device could be utilized when transporting people. He said bedrooms and bathrooms were common places for cardiac arrest to occur within residences, and the device would eliminate the interruption of

compressions during transport to the ambulance. He said the device would also ensure the patient was given proper chest compressions during the ambulance ride, which would eliminate the need for hazardous standing by first responders in the back of the vehicle.

Once the patient has been transported, Sebold said he or she could have use of the machine for as long as three hours. Sebold said it could be used for people destined for surgery as well as those who are pronounced upon arrival to the emergency room. He said providing blood circulation would allow for organ donation to occur after death easier with the use of the machine.

**OSF St. Anthony's President and CEO Ajay Pathak** said the hospital made the final donation for the Alton Fire Department to afford the nearly-\$16,000 piece of equipment because it would benefit the people of Alton, whom they treat and serve.

"It will benefit all the residents in Alton," Pathak said. "It is their device. It was an easy decision to donate that money, because it continues our commitment to provide high-quality care to our patients."

According to a release from the Alton Fire Department, fundraising efforts to purchase this device stagnated two weeks ago at \$7,682. After meeting with Pathak and discussing the plan to purchase the machine, Sebold said his department received a check for the remaining \$8,277 needed to get it from Pathak.

"I am grateful to OSF Saint Anthony's Health Center and to the outpouring of community support from local businesses and citizens," Sebold said in a release. "With this device I am confident that we can increase the cardiac arrest survival rate in the City of Alton."

"OSF Saint Anthony's is committed to the health of our community and we are pleased to support the Alton Fire Department's CPR capabilities," said Pathak. "Lucas 2 is a remarkable technology that will positively impact residents when faced with cardiac arrest and we applaud Chief Sebold's leadership in obtaining this life-saving equipment for the Alton community."

The Alton Fire Department is attempting to get a second unit so each of the two firehouses has one. Sebold said in the release he is "keeping his fingers crossed" his department can receive a grant, which would cover all but \$4,000 of the cost for the second unit.

**The Alton Fire Department would like to thank the following list of donators that made the LUCAS 2 acquisition possible:**

OSF St. Anthony's Health Center

Randi Tomlinson and Lovejoy Elementary

McDonalds

Simmons Hanley and Conroy

Illinois American Water Company

Alton Physical Therapy

Ladies Ancient Order of Hibernians

Alton Knights of Columbus

Roberts Ford

Quality Cadillac Buick GMC

Applebees and all that attended the fundraiser night in March

Macy's

Alton School District Superintendent Mark Cappell

Nautilus

Quirk Family

Nancy and Don Williams

Herbert Mosby Family

Bob Walters

Brueggeman Family