

## FAQ on AEDs for Fire/EMS - Featuring Powerheart AED -

### Why can't we just wait for EMS?

Time is of the essence. For every minute that defibrillation is delayed, the chance of victim survival is reduced by 10 percent. EMS response times, especially in rural areas and in densely populated urban neighborhoods, can be too long. AEDs need to be readily available to defibrillate SCA victims quickly.



### What about CPR?

The AHA identifies a defibrillation shock as the only definitive treatment for SCA. Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) works to pump oxygenated blood through the body and hold off brain damage for a short time, but it does not reverse SCA. When CPR is performed without defibrillation, it has minimal impact on SCA survival rates.

### How expensive are AEDs?

The cost of an AED is less than that of outfitting a firefighter with turnout gear or SCBA (self-contained breathing apparatus). There are various public and private sources of funding available, including grants and donations. Talk to a Cardiac Science sales professional for information about specific features, options and costs.

### What about personal and department liability for equipping our firefighters or vehicles with AEDs?

As a result of its easy-to-use design, the Powerheart AED reduces the risk of operator misuse. Consequently, if used in accordance with the directions in the manual and with proper training, usage protocols and medical direction, the risk of liability from using the Powerheart AED is minimal.

The laws surrounding AED usage vary from state to state. All U.S. states but one have passed Good Samaritan laws with language about AEDs. Additionally, the [Cardiac Arrest Survival Act](#), which was passed by Congress and signed by President Clinton in 2000, provides AED users and acquirers with protection from liability. This and similar legislation underway is helping to make AEDs the standard of care for SCA, and as such, organizations are increasingly at greater liability for **failing** to have these life-saving devices available.

### What additional training is required?

In many cases, a simple course including CPR and AED training is all that is required. For example, the American Heart Association® offers the Heartsaver™ AED course, which can be completed in less than four hours. Training requirements vary, so contact us for more information on your state's unique requirements.

### What is the best AED for our firefighters?

AEDs for fire department deployment may not be used as often as many other pieces of equipment, but when they are needed, it is a life-and-death emergency where seconds count. That's why the best AED for firefighters is one that is reliable and simple to operate under stress.

The Powerheart AED was designed with reliability and ease of use in mind, combining patented, one-button operation and pre-connected, self-testing, interchangeable

electrodes with an extended-life, non-rechargeable lithium battery to provide a dependable and maintenance-free solution to the demanding requirements of AED users in fire departments. In addition, the Powerheart is the only AED that can provide continuous monitoring capabilities during and after cardiac arrest, thereby protecting the victim against the reoccurrence of a life-threatening arrhythmia following resuscitation.

The Powerheart AED was designed to withstand extremely rugged conditions for real-world reliability. That's one reason why Cardiac Science's AEDs are the AED of choice for such departments as San Diego Fire, Los Angeles County Fire, Minneapolis Fire, Pittsburgh Fire, Boston Fire, San Francisco Fire and many more.

#### **Why should we worry about this now?**

Over 1,200 people will continue to die daily until AEDs become widely deployed with first responders, like firefighters. Since firefighters are often first on the scene, they can provide prompt defibrillation to victims of SCA while EMS is enroute.

The staggering and largely preventable death toll from sudden cardiac arrest has prompted a national movement to place AEDs with first responding agencies, like fire departments. AEDs are a hot issue, with resulting political benefits for those who capitalize on it. Fire departments can use AEDs to enhance their standing within the community at a relatively low implementation cost. Departments that fail to take a proactive approach to AED deployment will miss an opportunity to be an integral part of a national endeavor to save lives.

#### **How do we set up an AED program?**

There are several factors to consider when implementing an AED program, such as the selection of an AED, training, physician oversight, determining optimal placement and developing ongoing quality assurance programs. We can provide expert assistance with all facets of a comprehensive AED program for fire departments.