



MEDIA RELEASE FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CPR partnered with AED's - Save Lives – It's a Fact

October 8, 2010 (Mississauga, ON) – November is CPR Month. A number of recent unfortunate events have reinforced the importance of having the combined CPR/AED training with the added benefit of having an Automated Electronic Defibrillator close at hand.

Mississauga Fire & Emergency Services partnered with St. John Ambulance in 2008 to place an AED in all public buildings in Mississauga including libraries, arenas, community centres and city bus terminals. In the past few months, AEDs were twice used resulting in saved lives at two commercial establishments in Mississauga.

When everything is functioning normally, the heart generates small electrical impulses that cause the chambers of the heart to contract and relax. This pulsing action allows blood to enter the heart, as well as force it out to be circulated to the body. When a person is experiencing a heart attack or other cardiac events; damage to the heart muscles can disrupt the electrical signals causing chaotic rhythms. AEDs are designed to detect and shock two types of Heart Rhythms:

Ventricular Fibrillation (VF): This is the most common rhythm in cardiac arrest patients. Rather than producing a strong regular beat the heart quivers, as a result the heart is unable to pump blood effectively.

Pulseless Ventricular Tachycardia (PVT): This is a very fast heart rate (above 180 beats per minute) that interferes with the pumping action of the heart.

Many public places such as arenas and shopping malls have public access AEDs; these easy to use machines have proven invaluable in a cardiac emergency. Businesses are beginning to feel the pressure from their employees and eventually, in the not too distant future, it will become mandatory for them to have one or depending on the size of the establishment – several - of these life-saving devices on their premises. The costs of these AED units has decreased dramatically over the past five years and are now being purchased for private homes, especially by families at risk.

Training in their use is incredibly easy and also highly recommended. St. John Ambulance is the expert in this training and offer courses which include AED training or are specific to AEDs.

For 125 years, St. John Ambulance has been training over 140,000 Ontarians annually in first aid and other health care related courses and remains dedicated to saving lives at work, home and play. With over 4,000 volunteers contributing over half a million hours of community service a year, St. John Ambulance is an integral part of the community offering such unique and innovative programs as; medical first response, disaster response, car seat clinics, health and safety related youth programs and therapy dog services. As a charitable, non-denominational, humanitarian organization, proceeds from St. John Ambulance's first aid training and first aid product sales directly support these vital community services programs. For more information on St. John Ambulance training courses and volunteer opportunities see your Mississauga Branch of at www.sja-mississauga.ca.