

## Starting an automated external defibrillator program

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), 61 million Americans have cardiovascular disease, which results in approximately 1 million deaths per year. 300,000 to 400,000 of these deaths are due to cardiac arrest, which is most often due to chaotic beating of the heart. Automated external defibrillators (AEDs) can dramatically improve survival rates; immediate defibrillation can result in greater than 90 percent survival.

### Why Have an AED at Work?

In 1999 and 2000, 13 percent of workplace fatalities reported to OSHA were due to sudden cardiac arrest. Work factors that may contribute to cardiovascular disease include carbon monoxide, carbon disulfide, halogenated hydrocarbons, smoking, extreme heat or cold, stress, and shift work. Electrical hazards can produce cardiac arrest.

### AED Use

The AED needs to be in a place that assures a response between three to five minutes of the event. AEDs should be placed where many employees are present, at remote locations such as construction worksites, and near confined spaces.

An AED is lightweight, runs on rechargeable batteries, analyzes the heart rhythm, and automatically indicates when to shock. The victim will be more likely to survive the sooner the defibrillation is started, so instituting an AED program at work is an investment in worker protection.

### Suggested Locations

- Courthouses
- Fairgrounds
- County Jail
- Recreation Centers
- Senior Centers

This is not an all inclusive list. For more suggestions, contact your Loss Prevention Representative.

### For More Information

For more information on AEDs and starting your own program, go to OSHA's website at [www.osha.gov/SLTC/aed/solutions.html](http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/aed/solutions.html) or contact your Loss Prevention Representative at 303-861-0507.