

SAFETY CORNER

Public Safety Newsletter

TOPIC: CPR, You could save a life.

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It is something most people never think about, or ever want to think about. But just for a few minutes, consider this. What would you do if you found a friend, family member or a stranger, unresponsive showing no signs of life? I know most people would call 911, and that is correct, at least partially correct.

The Mitchell Ambulance covers a 900 square mile area, throw some bad weather into the mix and it could take an ambulance 20 to 30 minutes to reach some of our coverage area. Therefore it is important for everyone to know how to perform CPR. It is simple to learn and only takes a couple hours out of your day, once every 2 years.

A lot of businesses have made it mandatory for their employees to take CPR. Personally I feel everyone should be required to take a CPR class. I like the idea of showing a current CPR card when you renew your driver's license. Now before everyone gets upset with me, let me explain why I feel this way. CPR, breathing and Chest compressions help circulate oxygenated blood throughout the body to the vital organs, including the brain. CPR alone does not necessarily restart the heart, but sustain the vital functions of the body until the heart can be restarted. For most adults in Cardiac Arrest a device known as an AED or Automatic External Defibrillator needs to be used to restart the heart. The use of an AED is covered in most CPR courses.

So now you ask, why can't the ambulance crew just do this stuff when they get there? There is a reason why all of the County and City police cars have AED's and trained police officers. All of the schools, Public city and county buildings, clinics, and various other businesses in the area have AED's and require their employees to take CPR and AED training. The answer to the question is, TIME! The American Heart Association shows in their studies that early CPR and the use of an AED within the first 3 minutes of collapse can double the chance of a victim's survival. With every minute that goes by that chance drops drastically. After 8 minutes, a person who has no pulse and is not breathing has less than a 5% chance of being resuscitated. And after 10 minutes it drops to less than 1%. Average response time for the ambulance is 7 minutes. The time starts when 911 receives the call, until the ambulance arrives at the location. The ambulance is an Emergency Room on wheels. The same tools and medications that the Hospital has are also in the ambulance. We have these things for the same reason early CPR is so important, time. Time is our enemy. The faster a victim can receive CPR and advanced care the greater their chance for survival.

The Mitchell Fire Department hosts monthly CPR/AED classes. They are on the last Thursday of each month at 6pm. Classes last about 2 hours and cost \$25.00 per student. The class fees go towards supplies for the classes and to help purchase AED's for non-profit organizations in the community. If you would like to attend, please call the Mitchell Fire Department at 995-8445. You could be the one who saves a life.

Sincerely,
Joe Dolezal
Firefighter/Paramedic

If you would like to learn about certain topics please email cindy@mittchelldps.com and reference Safety Corner.

