

Telluride Public Access Defibrillator Program

An Innovative Community AED Program

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Even one death has a big impact in an isolated resort community like Telluride, Colorado. Several out-of-hospital cardiac arrests and unsuccessful resuscitations have troubled the small community in recent years.

In large communities, AEDs have become ubiquitous in airports and public places but there were none in sight in Telluride. This all changed in June of 2006 when a local cardiologist, Dr Mark Rosenthal, organized a group of community leaders, law enforcement, fire dept, emergency personnel and doctors to develop a public access defibrillator program for the Telluride region.

The response was enthusiastic and planning for what would become the TPAD Program (Telluride Public Access Defibrillator Program) spanned the next six months.

Rosenthal contacted Life Saving Solutions founder and CEO Jeff Zeiler, to discuss AED options. Soon, Jeff was on the road to Telluride for the first of many meetings with the planning group to discuss site selection, equipment options and project funding. There were special needs for the Telluride community because of the long winters in the ski town and Jeff Zeiler arranged for heated AED cabinets to be delivered for the outdoor sites in Telluride and in Mountain Village.

Ultimately the program deployed over 35 AEDs into the community of 3000 full-time residents. The ratio of AED available per citizen is excellent for such a remote mountain resort community.

Phase two of the program is community-wide CPR/AED training and the first classes are scheduled to begin in May of 2007 with the ultimate goal of training every resident of Telluride and it's neighboring communities.

Initial funding support for the training program has come from both the Telluride Association of Realtors and the Telluride Foundation. In addition, the high school has introduced CPR training into its health curriculum so that all students will have been trained by the time of graduation.

With widespread AED deployment and community-wide CPR training, the mountain resort community of Telluride, Colorado is fast becoming the model for a safe winter and summer travel destination as well as a safer community in which to live.

The collaboration between Jeff Zeiler and a resort community such as Telluride will certainly become a model for future public / private public access defibrillation programs.