

# City of Alpena

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## PARAMEDICS USE NEW CPR QUALITY METERS TO SAVE LIVES

Alpena Firefighter-Paramedics have a new tool at their disposal in the effort to save lives. Through grants from the Community Foundation of Northeast Michigan and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Alpena City Fire/County EMS ambulances are being equipped with portable CPR quality meters that give real time feedback to paramedics on CPR compression rate, depth and chest recoil. All three parameters have been found to be critical in maximizing survival of cardiac arrest victims. After the event, the devices also provide data that can be reviewed and used to maximize efficiency and effectiveness.

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Fire Chief Bill Forbush explained that “we became aware of this technology during our initial High Performance CPR training and knew that we had to bring it to our community.” The training was part of the MiResCu program administered by the Michigan Rural EMS Network (MiREMS). Alpena County is one of 16 designated MiResCu Communities where High-Performance CPR, Provision and registration of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and data collection and reporting to a statewide research project are leading the way in cardiac patient care.

The devices use an adhesive pad to apply to a patient's chest and the rescuers hands press on the device to compress the chest. In the initial minutes of a cardiac arrest, manual high-performance CPR by a well-trained team of EMS providers is superior to automated compressions. Alpena City/County EMS units are also equipped with automated compression devices nicknamed "thumpers" to do compressions while enroute to the hospital, increasing efficiency and safety during travel.



Tyler Suszek, an Alpena firefighter-paramedic and program coordinator for MiREMS is heading up the Alpena program. Suszek shared "we've been able to place several AEDs in the community, identify and register several more, and continue to provide HP-CPR training for area first responders." Alpena Fire provides EMS continuing education for the surrounding communities, and is providing HP-CPR training at a CE session later this month.

The Michigan Rural EMS Network (MiREMS), is a non-profit organization that works to increase the effectiveness of rural EMS delivery systems thereby maximizing patient care quality.

The organization brings opportunities, events, resources, and technical assistance to rural EMS systems and is funded largely through federal and state grants. MiREMS Executive Director Leslie Hall commented “Alpena is one of our most active MiResCu participants, doing all the right things to maximize cardiac arrest survival in their area. They could be a model for other communities.”

Forbush stated that the devices have been used in training for several months and were placed on Alpena City/County ambulances today for direct patient care use. The use of CPR meters, coupled with training embracing the latest science, thumper compression devices, and our Mobile Intensive Care Unit (MICU) program to transfer cardiac patients to larger hospitals as needed, we are on the cutting edge of cardiac emergency care in Alpena.”