

Automated external defibrillators in the workplace

OHS information for employers and workers

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) supports the use of automated external defibrillators (AEDs) at the work site, provided that the employer ensures AED use is integrated into the site's first aid program and emergency response plan, and that it can be safely used in that specific work environment.

Key information

Alberta OHS legislation requires employers to do what is reasonably practicable to ensure the health and safety of workers and other persons at or in the vicinity of the work site.

Background

AEDs can be effective at improving survival from sudden cardiac arrest due to ventricular fibrillation or ventricular tachycardia when incorporated into an emergency response plan that includes early recognition, notification and response to the emergency, access to emergency medical services, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), defibrillation and timely advanced cardiac life support.

AEDs are regulated in Canada as medical devices and are approved for sale by Health Canada's Medical Devices Bureau (MDB). Manufacturers are required to license each AED.

The MDB also imposes labelling requirements on these devices as required by the Canadian Medical Devices Regulation. Labels should state indications and conditions for AED use. Labels should also include directions for the safe use of AEDs in the manner intended.

AED training is a required component in Emergency, Standard and Advanced First Aid courses.

Recommendations

In considering the use of AEDs at a work site, an employer **must** perform a hazard assessment and identify the specific needs of the work site, including:

- Whether AEDs can be safely used (e.g. not to be used in a flammable environment).
- The population at risk – identify hazards of the workplace that may increase risk of sudden cardiac arrest.
- The existing emergency response plan.
- Availability of emergency medical services.

The employer **must** consider the type of AED being used at the work site and determine the appropriate level of training required for first aiders or other individuals. There also must be a system to ensure the first aid certification of workplace first aiders is kept up to date.

Employers and workers **must** follow the manufacturer's specifications for AED use, care and maintenance. The employer should ensure regular maintenance and inspection of AED equipment which includes:

- Verification of AED status and condition.
- Checking AED pads.
- Checking accessories.
- Ensuring batteries are charged.
- Cleaning the AED.

AEDs can be effective at improving survival from sudden cardiac arrest due to ventricular fibrillation or ventricular tachycardia.

Contact Us

OHS Contact Centre

Anywhere in Alberta

- 1-866-415-8690

Edmonton & area

- 780-415-8690

Deaf or hearing impaired:

- 1-800-232-7215 (Alberta)
- 780-427-9999 (Edmonton)

PSI Online Reporting Service

alberta.ca/report-potentially-serious-incidents.aspx

Website

alberta.ca/occupational-health-safety.aspx

For more information

First Aid Records (FA009)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/fa009

Workplace first aid approval: Alberta Plus Quality Management Plan (QMP) (FA017)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/FA017

Workplace First Aiders and Legal Requirements in the Workplace (FA011)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/fa011

Developing a First Aid Plan (FA012)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/fa012

Oxygen Equipment and Related Training Requirements at Work Sites (FA013)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/fa013

Medication in First Aid Kits (FA014)

ohs-pubstore.labour.alberta.ca/fa014

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