



Benton County Fire Protection District No. 4

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Benton County Fire District 4 paramedics Bonnie Benitz and Matthew Borschowa test a new cardiac monitor on a mock patient.

District replaces medical equipment as part of EMS program

[West Richland, Wash.] – Benton County Fire District 4 purchased nine portable Automated External Defibrillator (AED) devices and four cardiac monitors to assist emergency responders in treating patients experiencing sudden cardiac arrest.

The medical equipment cost \$143,355.43 and is part of a routine replacement program. Funding came from the fire district's Emergency Medical Service (EMS) program, which was approved by voters in 2010 to provide basic and advanced life support paramedic services.

These devices are critical tools to have in the field because they work together to monitor cardiac health and send electric shocks to the heart to try and restore a normal rhythm. The devices also help optimize Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation, or "CPR" performance by responders using real time health data and guidance.

Sudden cardiac arrest is an abrupt loss of heart function and one of the leading causes of natural death in the United States. According to the American Heart Association, almost 424,000 of these cases yearly are assessed by emergency responders outside a hospital setting.

Since January, 62 percent of all calls received by Benton County Fire District 4 have been EMS-related.

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Benton County Fire District 4 provides Fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to 17,000 people over 52 square miles, including the City of West Richland. Approximately 36 volunteer and career Firefighters, Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and six Paramedics respond to an average of 1,200 calls per year.