

## Contra Costa Emergency Medical Services



# EMS Best Practices

2008 EMS Week  
Special Edition



This special edition of EMS Best Practices acknowledges the outstanding contributions made by our many EMS providers throughout Contra Costa County. The EMS Week theme for 2008 is "Your Life is Our Mission." We would like to recognize the difference that each of you make through your commitment to the communities you serve. Your dedication to this mission provides round-the-clock care to those in need in Contra Costa County. Thank you!

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) is easily recognized by the public when they see a police car, fire engine or an ambulance responding to an incident. What they don't realize is that those responders, YOU, are a part of an intricate system of agencies and organizations that know what to do in a medical emergency. Each player in the EMS system has an essential job to perform as a part of the coordinated system of care. It takes each of you to save a life!

A car crashes, someone suffers a stroke or sudden cardiac arrest—an emergency—a bystander or loved one recognizes the situation as an emergency and calls 9-1-1. (EARLY ACCESS) The call is answered quickly by a primary PSAP and transferred to one of our three medical dispatch centers for interrogation and step-by-step instructions on what to do before help arrives. Dispatch shared in the success of our system on April 13th when Margee Freudentahl, dispatcher at Contra Costa County Fire, assisted a bystander with CPR instructions which ultimately resulted in the 8-year-old near-drowning victim being discharged home several days after the event. Margee was just part of the team—Contra Costa County Fire Engine 88's Captain Carpenter, Acting Captain Prescott, and Paramedic Firefighter Gomez, AMR's Thomas Westbrook and Dmitry Golovin, and CALSTAR's Ernie Acebo and Timothy Castelli cared for the victim.

Our public access and public safety defibrillation programs (EARLY CPR & EARLY DEFIBRILLATION) can claim several out-of-hospital saves in 2007/2008. A young woman of 83 collapsed in her home, and Brentwood Police Department Officers Figueroa and Schroer began CPR and delivered 2 shocks with the AED. When East Contra Costa County Fire Engine 54 arrived, Peter Benson, Brandon Earhart, and Jim Mathers found no further shock was required. They continued care with a return of spontaneous circulation and agonal respirations after good CPR and BLS airway. AMR Unit 6299, Matthew Wacker and Tom Rodgers arrived (EARLY ALS) and as they were providing ALS care the patient went into a pulseless V-Fib. A shock was delivered by the AMR crew, the patient converted to a Sinus Tachycardia and was transported to Sutter Delta Hospital where she was admitted to be transferred to an extended care facility three days later, awake and alert.

These are examples proving that the intricate system you are a part of is working well. Not everyone finds themselves on a call that saves a life, but dedication to a job well done each day is what really counts. **Each of you** should congratulate yourself for the job you do!!!

### TOP HONORS

It is not often that our patient is one of our own...and that is the good news! But, not the best news! Recently, while on duty, Don Danielson, Fire Engineer, Contra Costa County Fire, collapsed from Sudden Cardiac Arrest. Location, quick thinking on the part of retired B/C Ron Gesner who witnessed the arrest, and the crew members' - despite the impact of treating one of their own - brilliant performance all saved Don's life. Kudos go to Lon Goetsch, Robert Ray and John Kipp! Don has returned to duty and been promoted to Captain at Station 5.

Now that's the BEST NEWS!



YOUR LIFE IS  
OUR MISSION

NATIONAL EMS  
WEEK

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