



Emergency Operations Center

Action Ambulance Service, Inc. provides some form of pre-hospital emergency response to more than 600,000 Massachusetts residents over multiple communities and geographical landscapes. This extensive coverage area requires Action to interface with a multitude of public service agencies including, police, fire, public works, state police, and at times federal agencies.

The Democratic National Convention (DNC) which was recently hosted by the City of Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts required careful planning from a multitude of varying agencies. This planning process was complex, intricate and focused on the collaborative effort and integration of federal, state, local, and private entities.

The communities North and West of Boston were approached by federal authorities to establish a centralized communication and information point for all communities to funnel their information to state and federal authorities and for those agencies to pass information back to local communities. In order to

accomplish this comprehensive task, the planning team needed a location to host this Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The idea was to place representatives from eighteen (18) communities into on location during the week of the DNC. Additionally, they needed access to high speed data, generators, telephone lines, e-mail systems, food services, bath/shower/sleeping facilities. Action Ambulance Service's corporate headquarters fit the description. The organizer made a site visit to Action and they were sold on the location and supporting facilities that existed at Action. Now the planning begins.

Eighteen (18) community representatives led by Woburn Police Chief Philip Mahoney began to meet and coordinate the needs of the EOC. Each agency showed their true colors by bringing a key element to assist with the construction design and ongoing support of the EOC.

When it was completed the EOC had the following capability:

- Communicate directly to Massachusetts Emergency Management
- Communicate with state and Boston EOC's
- Communicate directly to any police or fire based agency from around the state
- Communicate with region tactical teams
- Communicate with regional Hazardous Material Teams
- Communicate with local and regionalize Emergency Medical Service Teams
- Communicate with local hospitals
- Utilize computerized mapping system to coordinate emergency response routes
- Monitor events that were occurring throughout the state

The EOC operated smoothly throughout the DNC and the success was due to the collaboration of all the federal, state, local and private entities involved.

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How to Prevent Back Injuries

Work-related back injuries are among the most common injuries that lead to lost workdays, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Of the 1.5 million injuries and illnesses that resulted in lost workdays in 2001, more than four out of ten cases were sprains or strains, most of which involved the back.

In order to avoid lower back injuries while lifting or performing other physical work, the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, Arlington heights, IL, reminds workers to:

- Keep lifted objects close to the body at waist level. Evenly balance loads with both arms.

- Get help if the load is too bulky or heavy to lift alone.
- Take rest breaks to stand up, change position and stretch.
- Avoid twisting, bending and reaching while lifting. Instead, rotate the entire body.
- If lifting or moving, bend with the knees not the back.

Lifestyle changes can also help to prevent back injuries. By tying the following tips, you can reduce your likelihood of back injury.

- Exercise regularly to keep back and abdominal muscles strong and flexible.

- Choose healthy foods and maintain proper body weight.
- Drink plenty of water and stay hydrated.
- Avoid smoking because it reduces the blood and fluid flow to the spine.
- Get sufficient sleep every day.



“ Do ”



“ Don ’ t ”

Action Ambulance Provides Kits for WPD

On August 22, 2004 Action Ambulance provided two emergency first aid bags to Wakefield Police Department to be used by their first responder motorcycle officers. Action Ambulance is proud to be working with the Wakefield Police Department to assure that the proper equipment and supplies are provided to their staff assuring that the members of our community receive

the best emergency care possible. In the picture, from left to right are Officer Scott Reboulet WPD, Action Ambulance EMT/Dir. Of Communications Mark Miller, Officer William Dalton WPD, and Action Ambulance Paramedic/Dir. Of Community Relations Wayne Gilbert.



Upcoming Community Events

- 9/8 CPR Recertification
Epoch of Melrose
- 9/9 CPR Recertification
Kirkwood House, Wakefield
- 9/11 Saugus Founders Day
Celebration
- 9/12 Melrose Victorian Fair Day
Melrose Commons
- 9/13 CPR Recertification
Melrose Care Center
- 9/18 Stoneham Town Day
Celebration
- 9/19 Touch A Truck Day
West Cummings Park, Woburn
- 9/21 CPR Recertification
Wilmington Health Care Center

- 9/21 CPR Recertification
Rosewood Nursing Center
- 9/22 CPR Recertification
Melrose Care Center
- 9/27 CPR Recertification
Rosewood Nursing Center
- 10/6 CPR Class
Epoch of Melrose
- 10/6 Car Seat Safety Lecture Series
Bright Horizons, Wakefield
- 10/24 Halloween Safety Lecture
- 10/26 Halloween Safety Lecture
- 10/27 Halloween Safety Lecture

If you are interested in attending an event listed or would like information on setting up a class please contact Wayne Gilbert, Director of Community Relations at 978-262-2617.



Heart Safe Communities—is your community one?

As of May 2004 there were 78 communities in the state of Massachusetts that have earned the status of “Heart Safe Community” Locally, North Andover, Tewksbury, Burlington, Reading and Winchester are “Heart Safe Communities”

What does this mean? Through the “Heart Safe Community” program, communities work to improve four critical areas:

- **Early access to emergency care.** This calls for early recognition of an emergency from bystanders and immediately calling 911. Dispatchers provide instructions for the caller and get Advanced Life Support to the scene quickly.
- **Early CPR.** This requires public knowledge, training and awareness. CPR, when done properly, buys precious time until a defibrillator arrives on scene.

- **Early Defibrillation.** Statistics show that survival rates for those who suffer from cardiac arrest, greatly increase when defibrillation occurs quickly. AED’s (Automatic Electronic Defibrillators) need to be placed in all public locations, training must be provided and community members must be prepared to use the equipment.
- **Early Advanced Care.** Paramedics working on an Advanced Life Support rescue vehicle need to be dispatched immediately to all cardiac calls and need to administer medications and oxygen therapy that is critical to the patients survival.

When striving to become a “Heart Safe Community” all of these components must be in place, and based on the population of your community, the requirements to meet each component will vary.

For more information on getting your community to the “Heart Safe Community” level you can contact Wayne Gilbert or Stacey Scott in the community relations department at Action Ambulance or visit the following website:

www.americanheart.org

It should be the goal of all communities to obtain “Heart Safe Community” status and assure that all members of the community will receive the best possible care in an emergency situation.



Trick or Treat—Do’s and Don’ts

Halloween is quickly approaching and we all want to make sure that all children have a fun time and are kept safe. When taking your children out for trick or treating please make sure you teach them these simple safety tips.

- **Don’t go out alone.** Always go with a parent or adult and stay

together.

- **Watch for cars.** Trick or treating time starts at dusk, just when visibility becomes more difficult for drivers. Make sure children have on reflective clothing, carry flashlights and watch carefully for oncoming traffic.
- **Stay in well lighted areas.** Only go

to houses that have lights on inside and out. Try to stay in areas you are familiar with.

- **Have an adult check the treats.** Make sure all candy is in its original wrapper, the wrapper is in tact and no substances are on the outside of the wrapper.

Be safe and have a Happy Halloween!

Congestive Heart Failure—CHF

Congestive Heart Failure (CHF) is more frequent in geriatric patients and occurs when the ventricular output is compromised, causing the patient to retain excessive fluid. CHF is often caused by ischemic heart disease, valvular heart disease, cardiomyopathy, dysrhythmias, hyperthyroidism and anemia. Patients suffering from CHF may experience the following signs/symptoms:

- Fatigue
- Pulmonary Edema

- Crackles
- Engorged neck veins
- Dyspnea (difficulty breathing)
- Orthopnea or the inability to breathe unless sitting or standing up straight
- Cough progressing to a productive cough with frothy sputum
- Pitting edema

The patient suffering from CHF

needs immediate medical care to reverse the symptoms and prevent cardiac damage. A patient that has a history of acute episodes of CHF should be considered to be in a life threatening situation. Elevate their head and upper body to a sitting position, provide oxygen and call 911. Emergency care for the patient with CHF along with oxygen therapy and ECG monitoring may include intubation, IV therapy and drug therapy – furosemide (Lasix), nitroglycerin, morphine.

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Tips for a Safe and Secure Hotel Stay

The National Safety Council provides tips for staying overnight at a hotel—for business or leisure. Follow these tips to make your trip as safe as possible.

- When you enter your room, check that everything is in working order, including your phone, lights, locks on doors and windows. Report any problems to the front desk.
- Read the hotel’s fire escape plan carefully. Locate the two nearest stairwells from your room and count the number of doors between your room and the stairwells—this will assist in an emergency evacuation if the hallway and exit stairway are dark or smoky.
- Make sure your room has a dead-bolt lock and a peephole, as well as a chain or latch on the doors. Securely close and lock the door whenever you’re in the room and again when you leave. Also lock all windows and doors, including connecting doors between rooms and sliding glass doors to patios or balconies.
- Never let anyone in your room without verifying the visitor and obtaining proper identification. If there is any question regarding their identity call the front desk as soon as possible.
- Keep your hotel key with you at all times and don’t display it in public. If you misplace your key, immediately notify the front desk.
- When leaving your room, leave the lights on and place the “Do Not Disturb” sign on the door. This gives the impression that someone is in the room.
- Place all valuables in the hotel safe. When traveling, only bring the cash, credit cards and jewelry you need—don’t draw attention to yourself by displaying them in public.
- When returning to the hotel in the evening, use the main entrance and park your car in a well-lit area away from trucks, vans, dumpsters or woods. Never leave items visible in the vehicle—secure them in the trunk or take them with you in the hotel.

For more information on traveling safely visit www.ahla.com. We wish you all happy and safe vacations.