

# AED saves life

## From Lakes Region EMS

When sudden cardiac arrest occurs outside of a hospital environment, an Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance, along with first responders, will bring advanced cardiac care to the victim.

On May 11 a situation occurred when a construction worker slumped to the ground at his work place. Co-workers called 911 and began CPR. Chisago County Deputies Foster and Meyer were the first to arrive on the scene.

They placed their Automated External Defibrillator (AED) on the patient. This device can deliver electricity to a heart in an attempt to restore normal cardiac function. The AED was able to deliver two shocks to the patient's heart.

When Lakes Region EMS arrived, Paramedic Adam Donahue and EMT Doreen Snell were able to determine that the patient's heart had no electrical activity and needed a variety of medications to help it re-start.

After giving those medications and inserting a breathing tube into the patient's trachea, the paramedic and EMT were able to again shock the patient's heart. The final shock was able to return the heart to a normal beating rhythm.

Sudden cardiac arrest is one of the leading causes of death

among Americans. After the heart stops beating, a victim has approximately six minutes before permanent brain death occurs.

The typical victim of sudden cardiac arrest is male, over the age of 50 and has a history of heart disease that may or may not be diagnosed. Although most victims of sudden cardiac arrest are adult, there are young adults and teens who although previously healthy, develop sudden cardiac arrest. Sudden cardiac arrest is very difficult to reverse but if the victim receives proper care within the first six minutes, the heart may be restarted.

Like all ALS services in Minnesota, Lakes Region EMS, Inc. is required to provide Advanced Cardiac Life Support. In addition to these basic requirements, Lakes Region EMS employees strive to provide exceptional clinical care to all patients.

Lakes Region EMS has established an AED program which, through donations, purchases AEDs for first responder agencies like the Chisago County Sheriff's Department. If you are interested in making a donation to the AED program, please contact Aaron Reinert, Executive Director, Lakes Region EMS, Inc. at (651) 277-4911 ext. 104.