



VITALS

A Weekly Safety Newsletter For Medical Transport Professionals

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AEDs In the News



A couple of years ago, a 44-year-old EMT suffered a cardiopulmonary arrest while playing racquetball at a health club. The staff called 911 and rushed to get their Automatic External Defibrillator. They began CPR but waited seven minutes for the local police to arrive and perform the defibrillation. Although the State law that requires health clubs to have AEDs available didn't become effective until four days after this event, the decedent's family has filed a lawsuit against the club. The club can't be cited for noncompliance before the deadline, but one legal argument is that the club has a duty to "exercise reasonable care for the safety of their customers." Some states require AEDs in health clubs and others have pending legislation to require AEDs in public schools, recreational fields and youth camps. Do you know what is required in your State?

On March 10, Welch Allyn recalled 14,054 AED 10 and MRL JumpStart external defibrillators made between October 3, 2002 and January 25, 2007. The Recall was the result of 39 reported incidents in which low energy shocks were delivered (20 cases); electromagnetic noise interference was present (8 cases) and the AEDs shut down without warning (11 cases). Any of these occurrences might prevent defibrillation in a cardiac arrest patient. Interestingly, the two deaths in the series were probably the result of a damaged device and failure to follow directions.

You can get more information from Welch Allyn at 888-345-5356 or at www.welchallyn.com/AED10Recall. The FDA MedWatch address is: www.fda.gov/medwatch/report.htm

In a Hurry? Think Twice

An EMT didn't want to wait in an ER for a nurse to sign his Patient Care Report (PCR). He forged a triage nurse's signature and left a five-year-old patient. Policy requires that an EMT complete a PCR and have it signed by an appropriate person at the receiving facility. Think he got reprimanded for violating policy?

He was charged with second degree criminal possession of a forged instrument and second degree forgery. Faced with two felony and six misdemeanor charges, he could spend seven years in prison if convicted. That's a coincidence because he has been employed as an EMT for about seven years.

