



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Community CPR Challenge**

For Immediate Release

February 5, 2016

Contact: Wausau Fire Department 715-261-7900  
Stevens Point Fire Department - 715-344-1833

### **Two central Wisconsin cities challenge each other to save lives**

February is American Heart Month, and to celebrate, the cities of Wausau and Stevens Point are challenging each other to improve survival from cardiac arrest in their cities. The challenge calls for training citizens in CPR, placing public access automated external defibrillators (AEDs), and raising funds for local foundations that support cardiac arrest survival. The fire departments in both cities will lead the efforts, promoting CPR classes and encouraging the purchase and placement of AEDs.

According to the Sudden Cardiac Arrest Foundation, every year in the United States, EMS responds to more than 320,000 sudden cardiac arrests. Nationwide, however, only about 10% are resuscitated and survive. Experts agree that many more could survive, if more bystanders would perform CPR and use an AED.

“Our best hope for saving more lives rests in the hands of family members, friends and co-workers,” said Dr. Michael Curtis, emergency physician with Ministry Health Care and chair of the Portage County Cardiac Arrest Survival Team. “We just need to train more of them to perform CPR and provide them with AEDs.”

Each fire department will record the number of citizens trained in CPR. Anyone conducting CPR training can help their community reach their goal by notifying the fire department of the class and the number of students. Any form of CPR class including a class on compression only CPR counts. Businesses are also asked to notify their local fire department of any new AEDs purchased in February and March.

Cardiac arrest survival funds have been set up by the Foundations of Saint Michael’s and Saint Clare’s Hospitals. Everyone is encouraged to make a donation, and the proceeds will be used to purchase AEDs for charitable organizations in our area. Anyone interested in applying for these funds can contact the Saint Michael’s Foundation or Saint Clare’s Foundation.

The Central Wisconsin CPR Challenge will kick off with a **press conference in the Council Chambers at Wausau City Hall with Mayor Tipple and Mayor Wiza at 1:00 p.m., Monday, February 8, 2016.** The Public is encouraged to attend.