



## PRESS RELEASE

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### Heart Safe Communities Honored at Fire-Rescue Med

#### Rockford (Ill.) Fire Department and Rocky Mount (N.C.) Fire Department Recognized

*Fairfax, Va.* – At the [Fire-Rescue Med Conference](#), the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) Emergency Medical Services (EMS) honored two fire departments with the annual Heart Safe Community Award. The award recognizes organizations with creative approaches to implementing and maintaining systems to prevent and treat cardiac-related diseases within their communities.

The Rockford Fire Department was awarded top honors in the large community category (population of 100,000+) and the Rocky Mount (N.C.) Fire Department took home first place in the small/mid-sized community category (population under 100,000).

The Heart Safe Community Award, sponsored by Physio-Control, examines communities holistically and how they've integrated their systems to work symbiotically. Agencies must demonstrate improved quality of out-of-hospital resuscitation through bystander CPR, AED deployment (PAD programs), out-of-hospital 12-lead ECGs, 12-lead ECG advanced notification to the receiving hospital or other continuous quality resuscitation improvements.

"The Heart Safe Community awards recognize the Rockford Fire Department and the Rocky Mount Fire Department for their dedication and work to promote a better and safer community," said Chief David Becker, chair of the IAFC EMS Section. "They demonstrate and serve as a role model for other communities to follow in protecting their citizens through their programs."

## **Rockford: Active Bystanders Save Lives**

Since 2004, the Rockford Fire Department has engaged in an aggressive campaign to promote bystander CPR. This public education campaign, coupled with 911 telecommunicators actively encouraging bystander intervention, has resulted in patients receiving CPR much sooner.

Additionally, Rockford implemented new policies to pre-assign patient care roles to EMS providers. This “pit crew” style of care allows EMS providers to more quickly initiate life-saving procedures for patients. Through these efforts, Rockford achieved an Utstein survival rate of 46.2% in 2015.

## **Early Interventions Save Lives in Rocky Mount**

The Rocky Mount Fire Department is continuing to implement a campaign to make automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) more available to the public. Rocky Mount has utilized several grants to place AEDs in highly traffic public and private locations such as restaurants, schools, and places of worship. AEDs have also been placed on all RMFD apparatus. Rocky Mount believes that making AEDs more publicly accessible will allow patients to receive critical interventions as quickly as possible.

Rocky Mount has built upon these AED placements by offering bystander CPR training. Rocky Mount has trained more than 4,000 individuals in bystander CPR. Since implementing these training and AED expansion campaigns, the RMFD has noted a strong and consistent increase in bystander interventions at sudden cardiac arrests.

## **About the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC)**

The IAFC represents the leadership of firefighters and emergency responders worldwide. IAFC members are the world's leading experts in firefighting, emergency medical services, terrorism response, hazardous materials spills, natural disasters, search and rescue, and public safety legislation. Since 1873, the IAFC has provided a forum for its members to exchange ideas, develop professionally and uncover the latest products and services available to first responders. Learn more at [www.iafc.org](http://www.iafc.org)

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