

PRESS RELEASE FROM
PRESIDING OFFICER WILLIAM LINDSAY

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Lindsay Hails Passage of Law Giving 911 Operators List of Defibrillators

PO Says Law Will Save Lives When Seconds Make All the Difference

HAUPPAUGE, NY, MARCH 23, 2010 – Suffolk County Legislature Presiding Officer William J. Lindsay today hailed the County Legislature’s unanimous passage of a law he sponsored that directs the County Department of Health Services to make its database of automated external defibrillator (AED) locations available to all 911 dispatchers.

“The simple fact of the matter is that giving our 911 operators instant access to this information is going to save lives in Suffolk County,” said Presiding Officer Lindsay. “When someone is having a heart attack, a matter of seconds in getting an AED to that victim is often the difference between life and death.”

Automated external defibrillators are simple-to-use, lifesaving devices that treat cardiac arrhythmias and many businesses and public buildings have started purchasing them to have on-site so that individuals with cardiac problems can be treated while waiting for emergency medical care to arrive. The Suffolk County Department of Health Services has a database containing the locations of all AEDs in the County, so giving emergency 911 dispatchers access to the AED database as a tool they can use when taking medical emergency calls is a simple way to save lives.

“With the number of defibrillators in the County increasing all the time, it makes it more and more likely that an AED will be located very close to a heart attack victim,” said Legislator Lindsay. “If 911 operators have that list, they can direct the first people helping a heart attack victim to a life-saving device that might be right next door.”

The Suffolk County Legislature at its meeting Tuesday also approved a bill sponsored by PO Lindsay that directs the county Department of Health Services to develop signs to be placed wherever defibrillators are located.

“Right now, the general public all too often has no way to know the location of defibrillators and the prominent placement of signs could save a life,” said PO Lindsay. “State law requires that signs be posted but all too often they are not. This is one way to try to make sure that the public knows where these life-saving devices are located.”