



Township of Monroe

County of Middlesex

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Monroe Among County's Few to Dispatch Automated Chest-Compression Systems

MONROE – The Township Council approved a resolution at its Monday meeting that will equip Monroe's Emergency Medical Service personnel with automated chest-compression systems, making the municipality the third entity in Middlesex County to employ this mechanical life-saving device.

"With quick deployment and proper application, we aim to save lives with this latest acquisition," said Monroe Mayor Gerald W. Tamburro. "You hope to never have to use one of these devices, but it's good to know that it's on-hand should any of our residents need it."

By late May, the Township's EMS staff will have 10 of these devices distributed among its four stations, outfitted in eight ambulances and two supervisor vehicles.

"Chest compressions are often the foundation of successful resuscitation," said Councilwoman Miriam Cohen, a registered nurse by trade. "Early studies are showing a higher rate of survival among patients receiving automated compression versus manual compression. This is the future of medicine and a vital tool for a community with a high senior population, such as our own."

The mobile device, comparable to the size of a backpack, is comprised of a board as its base and a piston-driven chest-compression aid that latches onto a victim. The system administers the exact amount of compression pressure in terms of depth and frequency and is uncompromised by environmental restraints or interruptions that can be commonplace in the confined space of a moving ambulance.

"This takes out human-error element," said Monroe EMS Director Judy Olbrys. "Today's CPR standards recommend 103 chest compressions per minute at a 30-to-two ratio; meaning for every 30 chest compressions we give, two ventilations are needed in the same time frame. Our personnel will continue to keep pace with the guidelines for ventilation; however, the machine will now deliver the compressions with exact precision."

The total cost of procurement is approximately \$150,000 but well worth the expense considering the sheer number of cardiac-arrest calls emergency personnel routinely respond to in Monroe Township, according to local EMS leadership.

"On average, we respond to anywhere from eight-to-10 of these calls per week," said Monroe EMS Operations Coordinator Robert Drako. "About five years ago, statistics showed that Monroe received approximately 60 percent of all cardiac arrest calls in the County."

Monroe joins the Cranbury First-Aid Squad, as well as responders from Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital in New Brunswick, as the sole entities in Middlesex County to acquire these compression systems.

Once the equipment arrives, all of the Township's 120 emergencies medical technicians, including supervisors, operations coordinators, directors and other staff, will undergo extensive training on the system.

All media inquiries may be directed to Monroe Township's Public Information Officer Maria Prato at 732-521-4400 or mprato@monroetwp.com.