

**NEWS RELEASE**

Contact: Chief Chris Hecht   
Sister Bay/Liberty Grove Fire Department  
920-854-4021

**NEW DEFIBS4DOORCOUNTY FUNDRAISING EFFORT AIMS TO INCREASE DEFIBRILATOR ACCESS THROUGHOUT DOOR COUNTY**

**$75,000 Matching Challenge From Anonymous Donor**

Door County, WI, February XX, 2022 - Fire departments throughout Door County are calling on the public to help put more automatic external defibrillators (AEDs) in key locations throughout the county and help save lives by donating to the Defibs4DoorCounty campaign.

More than 356,000 people experience [out-of-hospital cardiac arrest](https://www.sca-aware.org/sca-news/aha-releases-latest-statistics-on-sudden-cardiac-arrest) (OHCA) in the U.S. each year. For every minute that passes without CPR and defibrillation, the [chances of survival decrease 7-10%.](https://www.heart.org/idc/groups/heart-public/@wcm/@adv/documents/downloadable/ucm_462303.pdf) Quickly shocking the heart of a cardiac arrest patient with an AED can help save their life.

“Access to a defibrillator means that first responders or even bystanders can begin a key life-saving step before an ambulance arrives,” said Sister Bay/Liberty Grove Fire Chief Chris Hecht, who is also head of the Door County Fire Chiefs Association. “While not a replacement for calling 9-1-1, it allows patient treatment to start immediately.”

AEDs address an important public safety need in a community like Door County that attracts more than 2 million visitors a year, hosts numerous large public events and where nearly 4 in 10 people who live here year-round are [60 or older](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/doorcountywisconsin).

An anonymous $75,000 donation and matching challenge from a local donor was the catalyst for the fundraising campaign that runs now through Labor Day. The public can help meet the challenge by making donations at [www.Defibs4DoorCounty.org](http://www.Defibs4DoorCounty.org), in-person at local North Shore Bank and Nicolet National Bank branches and at any Door County fire station. Checks should be made payable to Defibs4DoorCounty.

If the public fundraising goal of $75,000 is met, the total amount of $150,000 would add approximately 80 new AEDs to Door County’s current inventory. Along with providing new units to law, fire and EMS responders, wall cabinets with AEDs would be available to schools, places of worship, and businesses and venues that frequently attract large crowds.

Government agencies, including police, fire, emergency services and the Department of Natural Resources, can submit applications for new, not replacement, defibrillators through www.Defibs4DoorCounty.org at this time. The application process will open to other organizations April 1. Recipients of defibrillators must commit to annual maintenance costs and other guidelines listed on the application form.

“We know that a defibrillation delivered by an AED and CPR make a critical difference in helping cardiac arrest patients before an ambulance arrives, especially in a rural area like Door County,” said Door County Emergency Services Director Aaron LeClair*. “*Making AEDs more accessible and part of our public safety cultural will help save lives.”

AED and CPR training is available for a nominal fee through the Sister Bay & Liberty Grove Fire Department.

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***The Door County Fire Chiefs Association*** *works to improve fire safety, education and prevention through partnership and cooperation with organizations throughout the county. Its members represent fire departments serving [are all DC fire chiefs members?]*