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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TO: The Daily Herald WKRM Radio Station
 WMCP Radio Station WMRB Radio Station

NEW DEFIBRILLATORS FOR COLUMBIA FIRE DEPARTMENT VEHICLES Devices With Life Saving Potential

Beginning Monday, July 26, 2010, there will be a portable defibrillator in every Columbia Fire Department vehicle. Three new defibrillators, technically called automated external defibrillators (AEDs), each cost around \$1,400. With this purchase, Columbia's new Fire Chief, Lee Bergeron, has completed an important goal for the department. Chief Bergeron announced today that "for years these devices have been in service on all fire and emergency apparatus and now they will be available on every vehicle with a Columbia Fire Department logo."

These devices carry tremendous potential to improve the chances of survival for anyone suffering from sudden cardiac arrest. Each year, according to American Heart Association estimates, more than 250,000 Americans die from out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrests. Most commonly, a sudden cardiac arrest is a heart attack that results in an irregular heart rhythm causing the heart to suddenly stop pumping blood. Time is enemy in these events, because the survival rate falls almost 10 percent every 60 seconds. An AED is a computerized medical device that can check a victim's heart rhythm and deliver an electrical shock to stop the abnormal rhythm. Brain damage and death can often be prevented by a quick response. American Heart Association statistics show that if a victim can receive CPR and defibrillation within a minute, the survival rate can be close to 90 percent.

By making AEDs more accessible, the department hopes to save more lives through early defibrillation. Over the last year, Columbia Fire Department statistics show that defibrillators have been used on average 1-2 times each month. The advantage for the community is that these devices are already available at all 5 fire station locations throughout the City and will now be on-site at all inspections and public education events. These new devices can only help to increase the effective and professional quality of EMS services available in Columbia and enhance the community's safety.

As with all new equipment, the Columbia Fire Department has worked to ensure that this new equipment is compatible with equipment used by Maury County EMS and to ensure that all emergency medical personnel have adequate training to use the devices. Fire Chief Bergeron credits the professional collaboration between Dr. John Maloof, Maury County EMS, Maury Regional Hospital, and CFD personnel with providing the adequate training and equipment needed to make a difference when cardiac care is needed in the community. Bergeron specifically recognizes the efforts of Driver/Firefighter Ron Rochelle, EMS coordinator for Columbia's Fire Department, for providing



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training on the new equipment. Bergeron stated that “Ron Rochelle continues to play an integral part in the development of the department’s overall readiness for medical emergencies.”

In addition, the City of Columbia is working to place defibrillators in all city facilities because of the value that they provide for all employees and citizens that gather in these places. Currently, defibrillators are accessible in City Hall, all Columbia Parks and Recreation Community Centers (including Fairview Pool and Rainey House in Woodland Park), the Police Department, and the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

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For more information on AEDs or Sudden Cardiac Arrest, please visit the American Heart Association website americanheart.org.

For information about the City of Columbia please visit the City of Columbia website at www.columbiatn.com or contact Jennifer Moody at jmoody@columbiatn.com.

Photos of Columbia Fire Department personnel training to use new AEDs are available upon request; contact jmoody@columbiatn.com. (photos added to press release for website posting.)



Driver Ron Rochelle demonstrating



Driver Ron Rochelle with new AED units



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