



## **News for Immediate Release**

**June 4, 2013**

### **Department of Health Exceeds Hands-Only CPR Goal, Extends Initiative**

**Harrisburg** – The Department of Health today announced it exceeded its “Lend a Hand, Save a Life” campaign goal of training 250,000 people in Pennsylvania in hands-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) by the end of May.

To date, more than 320,000 individuals have been trained. The goal is being extended to train one million people through the end of February 2014, which is American Heart Month.

The American Heart Association (AHA) has been recommending hands-only CPR for adults since 2008. Hands-only CPR has three easy steps: call 911, push hard and fast in the center of the chest, and use an automated external defibrillator (AED) if available. This type of CPR has been proven as effective as traditional CPR, which uses mouth-to-mouth, in treating adult cardiac arrest victims.

“Thanks to the hard work of department employees and our partners, I am pleased to announce that we exceeded our goal for the hands-only CPR program, and I know every effort will be made to exceed the new goal of training one million people by the end of February,” Secretary of Health Michael Wolf said. “Every individual trained with these potentially life-saving techniques helps to improve the health and safety of all Pennsylvanians.”

The campaign is a joint collaboration between the AHA, Department of Health’s Bureau of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the Pennsylvania HeartRescue Project.

Prizes were distributed to the top participating training groups:

- EMMCO East and EMMCO West, who with Punxsutawney Groundhog Club and Jefferson County EMS, trained over 30,000 people at the annual Punxsutawney Groundhog Day festivities – the most amount of people at a single event;
- Emergency Health Services Federation, receiving a Leadership Award for holding the most training events; and
- Susquehanna Emergency Health Services, receiving an Innovation Award for developing materials around this initiative.

“We are so proud of the hundreds of EMS agencies, schools, community groups, CPR training centers and health advocates for their dedication, hard work and

commitment to raising awareness around CPR and AED use,” Kathryn DiPuppo Tucker, director of the Pennsylvania HeartRescue Project said. “Increasing public awareness and familiarity of CPR is a key ingredient to improving survival from sudden cardiac arrest, and this campaign has been an extraordinary effort to make our communities more prepared to save lives.”

“Sadly, 89 percent of people who suffer an out-of-hospital cardiac arrest die because they don’t receive immediate CPR from someone on the scene. When CPR is provided immediately, survival can increase by 50 percent,” Pennsylvania Government Relations Director for the American Heart Association Jennifer Ebersole said. “Putting simple hands-only CPR lifesaving skills into the hands of thousands more Pennsylvanians thanks to the Lend a Hand, Save a Life CPR Challenge will save lives.”

CPR trainers can register events online at [www.heart.org/lendahandsavealife](http://www.heart.org/lendahandsavealife) to track the number of people trained and the date and location of the training. Numbers are reflected on the website so the public can track progress

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**Editor’s Note:**

For additional information:

- On the campaign: [www.heart.org/lendahandsavealife](http://www.heart.org/lendahandsavealife).
- On sudden cardiac arrest: [www.heartrescuenow.com](http://www.heartrescuenow.com).
- On CPR training: [www.heart.org/cpr](http://www.heart.org/cpr) or [www.redcross.org/take-a-class](http://www.redcross.org/take-a-class).

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