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Norman Weitzel, left, of Medic Ambulance and Fairfield firefighter Ryan LaRowe demonstrate the use of the LUCAS 3 automated CPR device, Tuesday, March 19, 2019. (Robinson Kuntz/Daily Republic)

Fairfield, Medic, NorthBay up game in saving heart attack victims

By Ian Thompson

FAIRFIELD — A new tool in helping people survive heart attacks was unveiled Tuesday afternoon by the Fairfield Fire Department, Medic Ambulance and NorthBay Healthcare.

The LUCAS 3 Device is a chest compression system that Fairfield firefighters have had on their engines since January, and has been used several times already on heart attack victims.

The device was demonstrated at Fairfield Fire Station 37 to local representatives.



Medic Ambulance and the Fairfield Fire Department recently received this LUCAS 3 automated CPR device. (Robinson Kuntz/Daily Republic)

Firefighters and Medic Ambulance personnel said the LUCAS 3's ability to give its patients continuous chest compressions allows first responders to better care for the patient.

"People tire out," said Medic Ambulance Vice President of Operations Jimmy Pierson. "This keeps the steady beat going."

The device helps eliminate the challenge posed by manual CPR by providing mechanical chest compressions at a rate and depth that is consistent with current American Heart Association guidelines.

"We absolutely save lives with these," said NorthBay Healthcare Chief Medical Officer Seth Kaufman.

Pierson stressed the LUCAS 3 Device is just one tool in the toolbox that strongly emphasizes an ongoing community education program to get more residents trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

Medic Ambulance, the Fairfield Fire Department and NorthBay Healthcare are involved in a public awareness campaign that will see them at schools, community centers, malls and other venues such as the Tomato Festival to promote CPR knowledge.

The goal is to offer CPR training that is simpler and more accessible to residents, making them more comfortable with the life-saving procedure.

That includes a recently built CPR training device that will be available at these events to show people not to be afraid of CPR.

Fairfield firefighters pointed out that heart attack victims given CPR by those who know how to do it immediately before first responders arrive have a much better chance to survive.

Fairfield Fire Chief Tony Velasquez said this three-way partnership was aimed at "providing even higher levels of service than we already have."

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Ian Thompson began working for the Daily Republic in November 1982. A native of Oregon and a graduate of the University of Oregon, he pines for the motherland still. He covered the military and Travis Air Force Base for the Daily Republic, as well as Suisun City and general assignment. He is an avid military history buff, wargamer and loves the great outdoors. He retired from the Daily Republic in August 2019.

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