

Prepared in the case of a heart attack

The North West Company is supplying each Northern Store with a defibrillator

by Roxanna Thompson
Northern News Services
Lidilil Kuo/Fort Simpson

Shopping for groceries at the three Northern stores in the Deh Cho is now a little safer.

The North West Company is equipping each of its stores, support offices and warehouses with an automated external defibrillator. The defibrillator for the Northern store in Fort Simpson arrived in early this month. John Dempsey, the store's manager, is excited to have the technology on hand.

"We feel much better prepared in the event of an emergency," he said.

Dempsey was one of 222 store managers and other staff with the North West Company who attended the annual Wintering Partners Conference in Winnipeg from Feb. 7 to 11.

During the conference, the staff received a full day of training in CPR and the use of the defibrillators.

"The intent of this machine is to make it so anyone can do it," he said.

Taking the defibrillator out of the wall-mounted case where it is being stored, Dempsey turned it on to demonstrate the machine's simplicity. The defibrillator uses both audio and visual prompts to guide the user through helping someone who is having a heart attack. The first message the machine gives is to call for an ambulance.

"It's never intended to replace medical care," Dempsey said.

The defibrillator, however, will assist until medical attention arrives. The machine walks the user through all of the necessary stages, including where to place the pads on the patient's body, when to

remove their hands as the machine delivers its electrical shock designed to restore the heart to a normal rhythm and when to continue administering CPR. The defibrillator has sensors so it won't shock a patient unless they need it, said Dempsey.

"They are a proven piece of technology that does help people survive in the case of a cardiac arrest," he said.

Dempsey said the Northern store is an ideal location for a defibrillator because it is centrally located in the village and sees a lot of traffic. Between March 4 and 10 approximately 6,000 transactions were made at the store.

Dempsey has never experienced anyone having a heart attack in the store in Fort Simpson but people have had other types of medical emergencies including seizures, he said. All of the staff at the store will watch the instructional DVD about the defibrillator so they are ready to use it if the need arises, he said.

Dempsey said it was an altruistic gesture on the part of The North West Company to install the defibrillators for the well-being of the communities.

"If it helps one person it will be worth it," he said.

A defibrillator has also arrived at the Northern store location in Fort Liard.

"I think it's a great thing to have in the store," said Annu Sahadat, the store's manager.

Sahadat said it gives the store employees peace of mind to know they might be able to help someone who is having a heart attack.

"It's a great investment on the part of the company," she said.

"It's never intended to replace medical care."



John Dempsey, the manager of the Northern Store in Fort Simpson, holds the store's new automated external defibrillator. The North West Company is equipping each of its stores with one of the devices.

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Officials - Bea Lepine, Bess-Ann McKay, Kirk Fabian, Randy Buggins, Rocky Lafferty and Richard Lafferty.

As well as all the volunteers who helped out with trailgrooming, signs, race start and race finish. We also appreciate the support from Highways, DOT.

OFFICIAL RESULTS March 17 & 18, 2012

10 Dog Class - 12 miles each day			TOTAL TIME
1	Ed Streepier	Minnesota, USA	1:20:21
2	Jake Robinson	Minnesota, USA	1:21:53
3	Dave Johnson	Tagish, YK	1:22:30
4	Dexter Lafferty	Yellowknife, NT	1:23:28
5	Trevor Lizotte	Yellowknife, NT	1:23:39
6	Bill Kormmuller	Alaska, USA	1:24:45
7	Mark Taylor	Hay River, NT	1:27:00
8	Alisa Blake	Yellowknife, NT	1:27:18
9	Danny Beaulieu	Fort Providence, NT	1:30:04
10	Anthony Beck	Hay River, NT	1:32:19
6 Dog Class - 6.5 miles each day			TOTAL TIME
1	Dave Johnson	Tagish, YK	44:24
2	Ed Streepier	Minnesota, USA	44:32
3	Dan Pawlachuk	Minnesota, USA	48:06
4	TJ Fordy	Fort Resolution, NT	48:40
5	Zack Campbell	Yellowknife, NT	48:53
6	Roland Campbell	Fort Chipewyan, AB	49:53
7	Susan Fleck	Fort Providence, NT	50:59
8	Anthony Beck	Hay River, NT	55:02
9	Trevor Lizotte	Yellowknife, NT	55:07